

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

[AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: (Exhibit 25) Chairman, members of the committee, I'm Michael Smith, M-i-c-h-a-e-l S-m-i-t-h, director of the Nebraska State Historical Society. Joining me today is the president of the Nebraska State Historical Society, Sheryl Schmeckpeper, of Norfolk, who will speak after me. We have reviewed the preliminary budget as released and thank the committee for its fair and positive consideration of our requested needs. We very much appreciate the inclusion of funds to pay for the increased utility charges leveled by NU-Corp, which provides us with steam and chilled water from the University of Nebraska generating system; for the amount of \$30,000 towards the relocation of our archeological collections; for the \$5,000 to provide the state share of federal grant to maintain our historical markers, almost 500 of them across the state; and for increasing the PSL to accommodate a new position to enhance our ability to work for Nebraska through social networking. Having said that, however, we respectfully ask the committee to consider three of our requests and to add funds to meet one need that came to our attention after the September 15, 2012, budget submittal deadline. So I'll go through these in order. First one, \$19,115 in a one-time, one-time 2013-14 appropriation. This amount represents state funding to match a federal transportation enhancement grant allocated by the Nebraska Department of Roads to the Nebraska State Historical Society for, one, making available to travelers--this follows up on our testimony you just heard concerning tourism--making available to travelers in Nebraska, via cell phones, enhanced historical information for each of our almost 500 historical markers. And secondly, two historical exhibitions, one at the Neligh Mill Historical Site at Neligh and the second at Fort Robinson State Park at Crawford. Completing these projects, again using 80 percent federal funds and 20 percent state funds, will contribute not only to the dissemination of historical knowledge but will also enhance the attractiveness and success of our state in the area of heritage tourism, which annually contributes \$196 million to Nebraska's economy and supports over 3,100 jobs. A recent study that we had completed indicated that Nebraska's historic sites and museums--community, county, local, as well as state--attract about 3

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

million visitors annually. That is our first request, \$19,115 in a one-time appropriation to allow us to match those federal funds and move these projects forward. Number two, \$9,600 in a one-time 2013-14 appropriation to enable the state archives to retain temporary assistance to examine 50,000 reels of county legal, land, and other records which were microfilmed prior to 1985. In 1985 it became clear that the acetate microfilm stock being used widely across the country, and certainly here in Nebraska, was unstable and could well deteriorate over time, thus losing the record that had been microfilmed. That has happened. Now many of the reels done before that time that are in our secure storage have to be reprocessed, but first we have to know which ones so that a plan can be prepared. This is serious in that most cases paper copies of the local records, the county records, were destroyed after they were filmed. New technology microfilm will take care of this; we get rid of the old paper copies that have it. This is something we dare not let slide and ask the committee to consider this request for \$9,600. And I would simply say that this came to my attention after our September 15 deadline, or it certainly would have been at the top of our list in our normal budget submittal. Third, \$30,000 in addition to the \$30,000 included in the preliminary budget for a total of \$60,000, these are General Funds, to pay rent for space that will meet state and federal environmental requirements for the storage of archeological collections. These collections area currently housed in cheaply rented space that lies beneath the city of Lincoln surface parking lot which consistently leaks water down on the top of storage shelves and boxes. So this is true. Go there on moist days and you will find plastic tarps overhead, buckets arranged to catch the water, and Trisha Nelson of our staff emptying those buckets. Since our agency's archeological work is funded primarily by the Nebraska Department of Roads for the purpose of meeting environmental standards for roads work, some have suggested the roads should pay for the storage of these collections. Actually, the collections have little to do with NDOR's activities. Most have been derived over the last century from NSH projects, our own projects, some are owned by the federal Bureau of Reclamation from dam and water projects in Nebraska. They serve as reference collections for contemporary roads work, but do not meet the federal highway fiscal allocation standards, meaning, of course, the

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

federal highway won't pay for their storage. We need to get these collections into space meeting standards which will cost us about, unfortunately, four times the current rent. I mentioned that under the parking lot was cheap. I mentioned that we also store collections belonging to a federal agency. We have the opportunity to charge the federal agency for a portion of our rental cost, but only if we meet their environmental standards, which we cannot do in the current location, thus our request. And fourth, \$64,100 in 2013 General Funds and \$65,061 in 2014-15 General Funds to support the 1.0 FTE request in PSL for the public information officer to manage our Web site and social media. We certainly appreciate your including that PSL increase in the preliminary budget. On the whole, I put in my notes that Nebraska is a national leader in providing electronic linkages between its agencies and its citizens, though an article in this morning's Omaha World-Herald would argue with that. Nevertheless, the Historical Society has been able to piece together enough staff knowledge and staff time to assemble a Web site, put up a Facebook page, and disseminate history via some blogs and YouTube postings, we have barely crossed the threshold of what these media can do and thus are neither as comprehensive nor as effective as citizens expect today. Last evening, Teresa Scanlon of Gering, Nebraska, was Miss America in 2011, spoke at the opening of the exhibition of her gowns and memorabilia at the Nebraska History Museum. She referred--and I was amazed at this--she referred only to her smart phone for her remarks. Mentioning this to a colleague yesterday, she said, well, she had recently been to a funeral service in Steinauer in Pawnee County where the priest took his eulogy and remarks completely from the notes he had stored in his smart phone. This is technology that is beyond my ability I think. Nevertheless, I think it gives the indication of what's going on out there among the people we serve and the people with whom we communicate. The Historical Society should move faster to provide history and thus engage our citizens via these new social media means. This is necessary for people of all ages. I used to indicate we used to talk about, well, the older members of the Society, people who have perhaps more experience and more age, won't use these mechanisms. Totally not true anymore; everybody uses them. We see that every day in our communication with our constituency. Funding for this position would move us

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

ahead at a much faster rate than would be possible otherwise. Nebraskans deserve many good things, including, we believe, contact with their collective heritage via the fastest and most available of social media. Thank you. I will try to answer any questions that you may have. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Thank you, Director Smith. Are there any questions from the committee? Senator Kintner. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR KINTNER: I'm looking at number four, the \$64,000 to manage a Web site and Facebook and YouTube and you probably want to tweet some things out, too, I would guess. You know, rather than spend \$64,000, you could get Jacob here behind me--Jacob, raise your hand--a student, pay him 12 bucks an hour, he can manage your Web site, he can handle your Facebook, he could on a contractual basis, you know, maybe over the course of a year you pay him \$15,000. He makes a little money for college, you have your problem solved, and the taxpayers save about \$50,000. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: I appreciate your suggestion and it's a good point. Actually, the position would be more than just managing the Web site. The position would be a person who would have this knowledge and ability to work on the Web, for example, or on a tweet or a YouTube, but also have the ability to take the information that's generated by historians who don't have that ability and bring that across to make it available in those new mechanisms. So it's not simply a matter of taking something that's Web ready or YouTube ready and putting it out. You've got to take the information, which may be an article in our magazine, it may be information on an exhibit that we have, it may be just raw data that we want to make available so a researcher could use it out there. So that's where, as my staff tells me, that's where that additional cost comes from. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR KINTNER: Well, you haven't said anything that Jacob couldn't do. I'm just

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

trying to think outside the box. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: I'm going to meet Jacob here after so. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR KINTNER: He's a great guy, he's a great guy. But if you think outside the box, there are so many creative ways to do these things that it doesn't always have to be a full-time employee with the benefits and a desk. And that's kind of an old way of thinking. It's how we always solved the problem--hire a person, train them, get them to do this. But today you don't have to do all that stuff. You don't have to pay all those benefits. You can really contract a lot of that out. And I would think if you really think outside the box a few of these things can probably be done in a little bit way...a little bit better way that benefits the taxpayers just a little bit. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Well, I certainly understand that point of view and I appreciate that. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR KINTNER: But in effect, I thought for the first time here, I'm thinking out loud, just throwing some ideas out. But I do appreciate you being here, and I appreciate all the hard work and the good things you do for our state. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Thank you very much, appreciate your comments. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR KINTNER: Appreciate it. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Senator Bolz. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR BOLZ: I appreciate your initiatives to go virtual and I think Senator Kintner has some good points about going outside the box and being strategic about how that works. I'm having a hard time thinking through long term how we reconcile both kind of growing our virtual world and invest long-term in the building and the structure. I think

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

that some of the trends in the future are to be a little bit more mobile and a little bit more innovative. And I'm just curious to hear your thoughts about how we balance both the need for virtual collections and our virtual work and discussing the building as we did earlier today. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Well, thank you. That's a very good question. I think on two points: one is making collections available on the Web through electronic means and we do that, not only paper collections or records or maps or photographs but also three-dimensional objects so they are accessible to those...anyone. It may be a local historical society looking to see this is something we have. We have this purse from Mrs. Jones who lived here in 1900. I wonder if the State Historical Society has something similar so I could compare and contrast. So we are moving in that direction to share those collection, those objects that Mr. Caruso spoke about earlier. On the other hand, as you take almost all of our exhibits that we do at the museum here are then translated into virtual exhibits and made available on our Web site. But then as we build that capacity and we build that knowledge base out there and people are used to using this, we need to keep up with that and make those available to them and keep up with that, you know, manage the database of information that we're putting out there. So, yeah, that's a...and that's been quite a discussion in the museum field for quite a while. Do you need museums? Is this the best way to go about? And you brought up the question of the museum, one thing we started looking at our museum with a group of citizens, members of our board, others back in 2009 and looked very seriously at the question is this the kind of institution that we need, this physical place going forward, and really looked at what advantages does that bring. Well, we talked about some earlier today--the location here, the ability to bring your history of the state as a whole under one roof, provide a time line exhibit, things Mr. Caruso talked about. But also we looked at how do we make that available for people who may live in Senator Harms's district in Scottsbluff, for example. Well, one of the ways we do that is through our historic sites, but also we can do that electronically, and the third way we do that is working as a collaborative partner with the local historical museums, wonderful

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

local...over 200 museums and historic sites across the state of Nebraska, working with them, bringing their objects to us, try taking traveling exhibits out to them. And so it's a constant dance, if you will, between the real object in one's hand right in front of one's face and the virtual object when it's not convenient for that person to have that direct contact. So it's something we really are looking at. It's a great question. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Are there any further questions? Seeing none, thank you, Michael. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Thank you for your attention at the end of a long day. We have two others who will speak and then if you have time and willing, we'd present very quickly that slide program. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: That would be great. We'll just have to keep it...make sure that we keep cognizant of the time afterwards. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Absolutely. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Okay. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Yeah, we'll move along. [AGENCY 54]

SENATOR MELLO: Thank you. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Thank you. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Next testifier on behalf of Agency 54. [AGENCY54]

SHERYL SCHMECKPEPER: (Exhibit 26) Good evening. And I promise I will be short. Thank you, Chairman Mello and members of the committee. My name is Sheryl

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

Schmeckpeper, S-h-e-r-y-l S-c-h-m-e-c-k-p-e-p-e-r. I am a resident of Norfolk and currently president of the board of trustees of the State Historical Society. I'm also vice president of the board of directors of the Elkhorn Valley Historical Society in Norfolk. I don't remember exactly when or how I became interested in history. I do know that I've always valued family heirlooms for the insights they offered into the lives of my ancestors. Those insights influenced the paths that I walked and the person I became. They are part of the reason why I am here today. I am also drawn to the places where history was made. I love to walk the trails worn by handcarts and covered wagons as they moved across the prairie, stand on the spot where Crazy Horse died, sit on the porch of Willa Cather's home. It's as if the spirits of those pioneers and warriors still hover about, encouraging me to explore new territory and to never surrender. The State Historical Society is keeper of that history. Our library, archives, buildings, and warehouses hold a plethora of materials and data, from the smallest fragment of pottery unearthed years ago, to the 400-some boxes of documents recently donated by former Senator Ben Nelson. We have it, safe and secure, yet available to the people of Nebraska to use to learn more about their state, their families, and themselves. We've been doing what we do for more than 125 years and we're good at it. That doesn't mean it's easy, just as I know trying to manage a state budget in challenging times isn't easy. Every department has needs and every need is important. But the State Historical Society can do what no other department can do--it can tell us who we are. And God willing, it will tell the next generation and the generation after that who they are and who George Norris or William Jennings Bryan were and why their stories are important. Fifty years from now if someone wants to write a book about Ben Nelson, he or she can thumb through the pages and pages of communications he left behind. And hopefully, an aspiring writer will find inspiration just by sitting on the front porch of Willa Cather's house. And hopefully school children will continue to learn how to build a sod house, women will marvel at Grace Snyder Yost's quilt of many pieces, and genealogists will find the leaves that have fallen from their family trees. That's why I'm asking you to protect our organization and to allow us to continue preserving, teaching, and inspiring. If we cherish the state's history, we cherish its soul and the souls of those who came

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

before us. If not, we risk the chance of forgetting who we are and where we're going.
[AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Thank you for your testimony, Sheryl. Are there any questions from the committee? Senator Nelson. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR NELSON: I just want to compliment you on your eloquent testimony, and you are a worthy successor to Willa Cather (inaudible) choose to be. [AGENCY54]

SHERYL SCHMECKPEPER: Well, thank you. Thank you, I appreciate that.
[AGENCY54]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: I, too, would like to compliment you on your testimony. I generally do...I really appreciated the "poeticness" of it so thank you. [AGENCY54]

SHERYL SCHMECKPEPER: Thank you. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Seeing no further questions, thank you. [AGENCY54]

SHERYL SCHMECKPEPER: Thank you. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Are there any other testifiers on behalf of Agency 54, the Nebraska State Historical Society? []

LARRY DIX: Good afternoon, Senator Mello. For the record, my name is Larry Dix. I'm executive director of the Nebraska Association of County Officials, appearing today in support of Agency 54 and specifically when Mr. Smith had mentioned the components on the microfilming. That is really the piece that we're really, really interested in. We ran

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

into this late, late in the fall when we were doing some microfilming in Cheyenne County and then came across when we went to the Historical Society to pull that film out and realized that, oh, we got a problem. And certainly we want to react to that problem, determine how widespread it is and so we can go back to those counties that still have the paper records, rescan those, resubmit the film so that we can protect that for future generations. So that's why I am here today. And I would ask that you certainly support that request from Agency 54. Thank you. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Thank you, Larry, for your testimony. Are there any questions from the committee? Senator Nelson. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR NELSON: Are we going to have to pay for microfilming 400 boxes of Senator Nelson's documents before people can thumb through them? [AGENCY54]

LARRY DIX: That really isn't a question for me from the county perspective, but I suppose if we want to keep them forever we probably would look to microfilm them. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR NELSON: I think we will, yes. [AGENCY54]

LARRY DIX: Yep. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Thank you, Larry. [AGENCY54]

LARRY DIX: Thanks. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Are there any further testifiers on behalf of Agency 54, the Nebraska State Historical Society? Michael, would you like to come back up and give

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

the committee a brief overview? Committee members, earlier because of timing on Senator Krist's LB519, they requested to provide a little bit more information on the appropriations request for that bill, which is a capital construction project. And I asked the director instead if he could provide this information at the end of the hearing so just in case senators had to go for other purposes that they were able to leave. But we want to try to keep it cognizant of everyone's time as well. So, Director. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Be very quick. What you see here will be...is pretty well covered in the handout we had and what you've already heard, but let's go through it. I appreciate your time. Here's a picture of the museum at 15th and P, built in 1967, converted in 1981, structural age 45 years, museum systems operating systems are at least 31 years old and almost all the ones I talked about today are still the original 1967 systems. Talked about recent work: the roof was replaced in 2009 by 309 Commission. We made a number of emergency repairs as we've gone along. Just quoting from the consultant report, the facility needs to the museum are reaching a crisis point and cannot be ignored any longer. Request, as I talked about earlier today, part is renovation, part is remodeling, renovation to address code issues, the fire code, and ADA code, certain mechanical codes, operations systems. We've talked about electrical, plumbing, and then thirdly, the building structure, that exterior skeleton of the building, which is precast concrete and needs, obviously, to be taken care of, certainly can't have that failing in the future. Fire code issues, again, from the report, minimum fire exiting requirements not being met at the current configuration. And this speaks to the remodeling part of it as well. On the lower left there you see behind where I'm standing where the podium is, an open stairwell and that's a fire code issue. But on the right you see people...chairs set up in the lobby space, in the hallway space for a program that we're having. So again, remodeling as part of the process would allow us to get much better, much more space and more usable space, and space on that first floor which we could keep out of the fire exits and would keep people out of the fire exits. We talked about that open stairwell. Let's go to the next one. ADA issues: restrooms and elevators are noncompliant. On the lower left is our auditorium. It was originally built by the...I hope there are no one here

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

who is a member of the Lincoln Elks...built by the Lincoln Elks as a step-down bar. So if you got all the way down to the lower part of it where the bar was located, I presume you had to have not too much to drink so you could actually walk back up the stairs to get out of it. It made a wonderful auditorium when we moved into it, but today it certainly does not meet the kind of codes that we have to and frankly, it's limited. It only seats 75 and we could easily do programs with 100-150 people and regularly have that many as we could try to make it work in the building. Mechanical code: we bring our air in at the street level, which obviously isn't what you want to be doing today or never did want to be doing. Electrical codes: We talked about overloaded panel boxes, the high cost of operating exhibit lighting, need to replace failing electrical systems that pose a hazard, and that was brought up in the discussion today. I talked about the Charnley collection and the items that were damaged. But again, there's no vapor barrier in the exterior of the building. So you put vapor or you put humidity into the building to preserve your artifacts or your collections, whatever they may be. But if there's no vapor barrier, it goes right out into the brick and actually deteriorates your building. So it's something we have to be very cognizant of. We talked about electrical, plumbing, and elevators. The elevators aren't made anymore. Right now I think they're trying to acquire parts where they're needed, perhaps in Mexico, or we have to find someone who can fabricate the parts. I've talked about the concrete post and beam system. There you see on the right parts of the drainage system that was built into, but those drainage systems are deteriorating inside and you're starting to see some concerns with that. Actually it was a surprise to me as we got into the study. I hadn't really focused on that. Remodeling to address visitor access, circulation, serving school classes. Senator Larson asked about that. Capture of unused space or space which is exterior to the building. (Inaudible) remodeling solves corridors used for programming space, family workshops again (inaudible) insufficient space. We could make much more use of that first floor in the building if we're able to rearrange the spaces and connect, for example, our hands-on room next to our conference room next to our meeting room so we have something we can open all those spaces up and bring people together in a much larger area. So that's what we're trying to do and to do the work at a time when we're working in the building

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

anyway, which is certainly in the long-term the most efficient way to do. We talked about the budget and thanks to the 309 Task Force for making that allocation. We've talked about the two parts of the General Fund request, the \$4.5 million and the \$2.6 million. Renovation, 72 percent; remodeling 28 percent. We tried to be very fair and open as to what we're asking you for here. Project results cost savings, we're not talking about a new building; we won't be talking. The other thing I don't think I responded to, in fact, didn't share, we asked the engineers and the architects if we do this, how long is this good for? A very fair question, and they said about 40 years, which is about the same answer we got three or four years ago when we did our headquarters building, the work that we did there, the \$5 million project we did there, is something that will serve the people very well for a whole generation or more of people. So I think we'd like to approach it from that point of an investment. I think I've covered the other things. Not taking action, we could all imagine rapid deterioration and emergency repair. 309 sees this building as one of those that they have across the state they'd like to just get fixed instead of pouring a little bit of money into it all the time, and I don't blame them for that. I think that's basically what we talked about. What's not in the request, we're not asking for money for exhibits, new offices, or work areas above the first floor so we're really doing this as effectively as we can. Obviously, our fellow citizens would like to have access to and protection of their cultural heritage collection, a state museum that maintains its national standards. We are an accredited institution, perhaps one in ten museums across the country is accredited. We like to keep that status for a number of reasons, not the least of which it does allow us to bring in traveling exhibits and means we're doing our best work for the people whose collections we've taken, hold in perpetuity, and an efficient delivery of systems. So that's the story. Any other questions? I'd be happy to answer. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Thank you, Director Smith. Questions from the committee? Senator Kintner. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR KINTNER: No. [AGENCY54]

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

SENATOR MELLO: No questions. Thank you then. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: I can respond to Senator Nelson's point about Senator Nelson's paper, the other Senator Nelson is that those are restricted for 15 years. So perhaps you're right. We will not be into them till after that time so. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR NELSON: Well, thank you for that response. And I'm still curious, you know, so they're restricted for 15 years and then would you allow people to examine them and look through them before you actually microfilm them? [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Oh, yes, yes, yes. Most of the gubernatorial papers are not microfilmed, for example. And what Larry was talking about, what I was talking about are county records. The counties microfilm their records by and large. We take that microfilm, we put it in a vault here in Lincoln. It's a security microfilm. We can then make copies of that so that if something happens in the courthouse in Cheyenne County or Red Willow County that security microfilm is here. But when there's a problem with the security microfilm and your backup, it has a problem that we have to address. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR NELSON: Do you do that as a benefit to those county offices or just for your own? [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Under the statutes, the counties are responsible for maintaining those, so we actually provide a benefit by providing those here. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: And everybody is assured that there's one place where they are secure. [AGENCY54]

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: All right, appreciate that. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR KINTNER: Now I do have a question. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Senator Kintner. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR KINTNER: Why are we microfilming? Why don't we just scan it on-line, have it there? It's unlimited space. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Very good question. Microfilm has about an estimated 400-year life span. Anything done digitally has a life span until the next generation of technology comes across. So as we like to say in our business, remember the 8-track? Remember 8-tracks and Beta and all of that that we used to watch our films on? [AGENCY54]

SENATOR KINTNER: Yes, I do. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Those are all gone and you can't even find a machine...we might have a machine because we keep that kind of material. We might have a machine that you could watch that on, but I guarantee you hardly anybody in the country has such a machine today. So the projected costs and concerns with translating or moving your data that's electronically preserved to the next generation of readers, reader material, reader equipment is something that the National Archives...it's a major question across the country and around the world. But microfilm, when we put it on microfilm when we don't use acetate-based microfilm stock, has an estimated 400-year life span, a much safer...in fact, it will last much longer than the paper it's on originally. So it's the best system or the best technology that the worldwide community of records preservation has is microfilm. [AGENCY54]

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office
Rough Draft

Appropriations Committee
March 05, 2013

SENATOR KINTNER: Okay. That answers my question. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Good question. That was a very good question. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: Are there any further questions? All right. Thank you so much, Director. [AGENCY54]

MICHAEL SMITH: Thank you. Thank you for your time and listening this afternoon. We really appreciate it. [AGENCY54]

SENATOR MELLO: That will close tonight's hearings on Agency 54, the Nebraska State Historical Society and end the Appropriations Committee for the evening. Thank you. [AGENCY54]