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Legislature's Planning Committee
June 09, 2017

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The Legislature's Planning Committee met at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, June 9, 2017, in Room 1003 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing. Senators present: Paul Schumacher, Chairperson; Tony Vargas, Vice Chairperson; Joni Craighead; Matt Hansen; Merv Riepe; Jim Scheer; John Stinner; Dan Watermeier; and Matt Williams. Senators absent: None.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: We'll call this meeting of the Planning Committee to order. As a matter of introduction before we kind of do our role here and get started and for the benefit of the new members and the folks who are in the room with us, the Legislature's Planning Committee was created by Section 50-1403 and it shall, according to that particular law: Collect and analyze data about Nebraska, including, but not limited to, demographics, workforce, education, wages, wealth, tax structure, revenue, natural resources, assets, challenges, trends, and growth and efficiency of government. It shall also: Identify long-term issues of significance to the state; it should set goals and benchmarks; and it should issue a yearly report of its findings; and also it shall propose legislation. In my way of thinking long-range planning involves three levels of analysis: something they call systems analysis, which is a survey of the present status of a system. If we think of it in terms of a vehicle, it would be such things as tire pressure, weight, horsepower, location, and number of occupants; kind of a snapshot of the present. A projectional analysis, which is the projection of the probable status of things over time, given known forces; kind of like the forecast of a hurricane track. You don't know for sure where it'll be, but you know where the probabilities are. And finally, analysis of the trajectory, which is an assessment of forces available to be deployed at strategic points in time to affect a desirable change in status over time. It's like calculating how to nudge a doomsday asteroid ever so slightly when it's far out in space so that it misses the Earth. The committee is unlike most committees, because we're supposed to look into the future. And, therefore, I think we invoke the doctrine of academic freedom, meaning that without incurring political consequence members are free to advocate positions they currently do not believe, argue against positions they currently believe, explore far out and unconventional ideas, and even preach heresy in the execution of our duties to separate out the beckoning of the future from the clatter of the present and the echoes of the past. That

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being said, we can go around the room and introduce ourselves, and that is a mechanism of taking roll. Senator Vargas.

SENATOR VARGAS: Tony Vargas, representing District 7, downtown and south Omaha.

SENATOR RIEPE: Merv Riepe, Legislative District 12, which is Millard, Omaha, and Ralston.

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Joni Craighead, District 6, which is Omaha.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Matt Williams, District 36, Dawson, Custer, and the north part of Buffalo Counties.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Dan Watermeier from Syracuse, southeast Nebraska.

SENATOR STINNER: John Stinner, Scotts Bluff County, District 48.

SENATOR SCHEER: Jim Scheer, District 19.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Peg Jones, she's acting as our clerk today. She's worked with me since I've been in the Legislature and this is her maiden voyage on running this thing, this equipment. And I'm Paul Schumacher, District 22. Over the term of the Planning Committee, which I think we're going into about ten years now, there have been numerous studies done of the status of the state, what it looks like out there, and what we're heading into. Senator Riepe and myself are the only two people who have been here and seen some of this before. And so in order for us all to get on the same page for this session and perhaps the next session or two this will be a review of some of the more major work that has been done as far as studies to bring everybody else up to speed. And also to let you know that if you want to dig into it deeper on any particular issue, the Web addresses of the work that's been done to put some of this on the Web and make the information available. Jerry Deichert, with the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Public Policy School, has been instrumental in amassing the data and trying to glean through such things as financial reports and the census and things like that to be able to put together a very nice presentation over the years and today a recap of some of the things that we're pretty

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sure of what are happening in the state, so we can get kind of a base on which we can begin to think. So, Jerry, it's all yours.

JERRY DEICHERT: (Exhibit 1) Okay. I think you have before you this report, but this is just a...our dean of our college, John Bartle, and I have been working since the inception of the committee in 2009 with the committee. And so we put together a kind of an overview of the different types of information that's in the...that we've been collecting over the time. Every year we've added a little bit more as the committee has wanted some more information. And so we've got our names on there. I don't have my phone number on there, but I think if you need to get any information we're more than willing to help you provide other information, you or your staff members. As you can see, as Senator Schumacher said, the committee was in 2009 and I don't think we need to read this to you again. But one of the primary parts of it was the establishment of benchmarks, and benchmarks were established in the first couple of years. And the idea was benchmarks that were data driven and with information that was readily available from sources that anybody could get access to. So it wasn't any source from any special organization or anything else. So like the Census Bureau or the state agencies or some federal agencies and not some private consulting company or something else. So we have a source that anybody can get to. There's going to be consistent information collected over time. And so if there's any discussion, it's not over the quality of the data, it's what you do with it and how it's interpreted and not how it was collected. The nine areas that were determined at that first couple of years were: agriculture, economy, education, health and human services, natural resources, public safety, state and local government, transportation, telecommunications. And there really haven't been any indicators that have been added to those benchmarks over the last few years, but there's always the possibility of adding an indicator if somebody sees something that would really like to add to that. The first report that we have is what we call the Planning Database. And it combines information for...at the state level for all of this information, the benchmarks. And there are some neighboring states or comparison states, and it's Nebraska's bordering states plus North Dakota and Minnesota. So it's that kind of that north-central region and then the bordering states of Nebraska the comparisons are made with. The first item on here that we get from the database looks at local government units per 100,000 population and compares Nebraska to the United States. And there's also a comparison among all the states. But I just put this one on here to see that if you look at it, Nebraska has an awful lot of local governments compared to the rest

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of the U.S. And, in particular, Nebraska has a lot of special districts. And obviously Omaha has sanitary improvement districts, but there are...when you go over the list of potential local governments, there are cemetery districts, there are fire districts, there are dozens and dozens of different local districts that have some type of taxing authority. Whether or not they use it is one thing, but they do exist. And so you can see that Nebraska has 68 special districts per 100,000 population. One of the first things that we did in...when we look at some of the reports that we've done is, you see counties. When we first started there was a question about whether Nebraska could merge counties. And so we looked into that and there's some cost savings on one side, but then there's additional costs to...for consolidation. And so the thought was that it's better doing cooperation than it is merger as far as saving costs on...for county...local...for county governments. Another part of the database as you can see is we're looking at state government expenditures per capita. And we put together the two types of tables. One, you can see how Nebraska compares to the U.S. on the different types of expenditures and then you can see where Nebraska fits nationally as far as per capita expenditures. And you can see at the state rate, Nebraska is kind of in the middle of our neighbors and it's ranked 31st in the nation as state expenditures per capita. And we're talking about total direct general expenditures, not just general funds.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Jerry.

JERRY DEICHERT: Yes.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I have a question now. Go back to the very beginning. You said in 2009 you made your benchmarks.

JERRY DEICHERT: The committee made the benchmarks.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: The committee made the benchmarks. Coming back to this Planning Database, this is something that's always intrigued me, going back to page 4 where you have the United States compared to Nebraska. Every one of those is four to five times higher. Is it magical? I mean, how does it just work out that way?

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JERRY DEICHERT: Well, there's two...well, one is...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: On the average it's that way.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: As a matter of procedure...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I'm sorry.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: But, no, it's...what Senator Watermeier did is just fine. But for the record, so that she can figure out...state who you are before you talk. It is necessary. We're kind of informal. It isn't necessary for me to recognize somebody.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I think it is. You're right, I think it is.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: But at least say, Senator Watermeier, so she has it on the record.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: These are kind of informal things and if you don't do what you just did and ask questions as it comes into your mind, then you forget. And this is kind of designed to bring out information and get us all thinking. So go right ahead.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay, yeah. So...thank you, Chairman. But anyway, has that been studied, answered, kind of put to bed, why that's four or five times higher? But what's interesting to me is the dollars isn't higher that they spend, just the amount of local entities that are created. Is that correct?

JERRY DEICHERT: Yes. From what we have looked...and we've not looked at that in particular, but just in general when we've looked at who some of those local governments are, as I said, a lot of them don't really have any...like there's hospital districts. Well, they don't really have any...they don't really collect any taxes and so they're operating as a quasi-public...

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: Some of them nonprofit.

JERRY DEICHERT: Nonprofit.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Yeah, yeah.

JERRY DEICHERT: So it's a...there are those kind of things that happen. And there are a lot of water districts and electric power districts.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: That's where I was heading. Is power districts...public, Nebraska Public Power mixes in with this as well, right?

JERRY DEICHERT: It fits in there as...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: And that's part of that.

JERRY DEICHERT: But it doesn't count in the general expenditure part of it.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Because we would spend it anyway?

JERRY DEICHERT: Well, I'll show you. When I get to it you can see it's broken out separately, so...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay.

JERRY DEICHERT: ...it's not included in the total, but it is included. Utilities are always broken out separately, because they're not comparable across states. Some states have it and some states don't. So I'll...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay. Thank you.

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JERRY DEICHERT: Yeah, that's a good point. I'll make sure I point that out when I get to one of the next slides. But yeah, and part of the reason is Nebraska has just a small population base. I mean, one of the things...I don't know if I'll show it this time but next time is, right now there's about 530 incorporated cities in Nebraska. The median size town in Nebraska is 312 people or is it 318, I don't remember what the number is, but it's around 300. So half the towns in Nebraska have fewer people than that.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Really?

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: It counts all their suburbs, too, right?

JERRY DEICHERT: So we've got a lot of very small governmental entities in Nebraska. You know, Nebraska has 11 counties that have fewer than 1,000 people.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay. Thank you.

JERRY DEICHERT: Okay. And then when you look at where is Nebraska typically higher, you can see we have...at the bottom we have utility expenditures...and this is for state government...see if I can highlight...you can see we have...I guess you can't see that on the screen. We have utility expenditures at the bottom. That's not included in the direct general expenditure, it's just a separate item. So we included it there for comparison purposes, but it's not part of it. But when you look at the state, where did the state spend most, more than the U.S.? Transportation and environment and housing. Transportation, we've got small population, lots of roads, right? And about the same on education, little bit less on social services and income maintenance, and everything else is pretty close to the same. And as you can see where we compare nationally...and this was 2013-14. I think it's been revised since then. I think something just came out recently about state government expenditures and we'll include that later. When you look at local government you can see Nebraska has the 13th highest per capita expenditures...local government expenditures. And it's still not as high as many of our bordering states, but it's again kind of the middle of that. And it's again pretty close to what the national average is. And where does Nebraska spend slightly more on locally? Education services. And again everything else is pretty close to the national average. A little bit less on social services and

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income maintenance. And education services, Nebraska has one of the lowest percentages of education that comes from our expenditures that come from the state government and so we're a lot higher local. And then I've put that utility expenditure at the bottom. It's not included in the general, but you can see how important local utility expenditure is for Nebraska compared to the U.S. It's what, five times, four times the U.S. average about.

SENATOR SCHEER: How do you figure the utility expense?

JERRY DEICHERT: This is...all these data are collected by the U.S. Census Bureau and they look at...they get all the state and local government budgets and they compile it that way by looking at the budgets. So...

SENATOR SCHEER: Well, I guess...and in my mind...for example, in most communities if you're with NPPD part of their franchise fee produces...they get...they'll take X percent of their billings and put into infrastructure. That's not a cost to the community. So I'm trying to figure out where these costs come from...

JERRY DEICHERT: Yeah, I understand.

SENATOR SCHEER: ...from the community standpoint.

JERRY DEICHERT: Right. Right. These are expenditures by NPPD. These are expenditures by the utilities. These are the government entities that provide the service, not the payments.

SENATOR SCHEER: Okay. So local government entities is not to be confused with a municipality or a town, it could be county or any other (inaudible) raising taxes and expending dollars?

JERRY DEICHERT: It could be anything that is basically...right. So it has an electric board, it has those definitions of local governments. So it doesn't necessarily have to...when we think of a general purpose government or a multipurpose government like a county or a city, these are all special purpose districts.

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SENATOR SCHEER: Okay. Thank you.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: The record show that was Senator Scheer.

SENATOR SCHEER: I'm sorry.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And that is a continuing problem with a lot of this data is, how do we separate out this anomaly of public power, because there's a lot of money goes there, a lot of expenses. But the...and this is Senator Schumacher talking now. Jerry, that utility expenditures, that is if NPPD builds a transmission line, that's there.

JERRY DEICHERT: That is the expenditures by NPPD. It's not the cost that a local government pays to the utility or utilities, it is the government entity that provides the service. So it would be NPPD, OPPD, Loup, every public power district.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: That's not what we use to heat this Capitol?

JERRY DEICHERT: No. No.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Okay.

JERRY DEICHERT: It's not the retail cost, it's what they spend in doing what they're doing. Okay? Another item in here looks at how Nebraska compares to the U.S. as far as per capita personal income, kind of the economy side. So if we take the per capita income of Nebraska and divide it by the per capita income of the U.S., if it's 100 percent then we're the same. And you can see, for much of the '80s and all the way till about 2006 Nebraska was about 95 percent or a little bit between 95 percent...a little bit above 95 percent, but around average about 95 percent of the U.S. average as far as per capita personal income. Then in 2006, you can see that Nebraska had a boom and had growth in income. And so in 2010, Nebraska was 105 percent or 5 percent above the U.S. average. And since then it's dropped down to where the more recent...the most recent complete year for 2015 we're just about again at the U.S. average. And obviously, the reason for that was...one of the big reasons was the big increase in commodity prices and farm

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income. And you could see that in 2006, farm income was about \$2 billion and by 2010 it was almost \$8 billion. And in recent...most recent has dropped down to \$4 billion. So you can see how big of a increase and how that had an impact on the state's personal income. Now, one of the things that we've noticed and one of the reasons why I think when Senator Harms wanted to put all this data together is that sometimes when you look at information from dissimilar areas you kind of see a connection. You know, we're not going to make those formal connections, but you kind of have that, well, ah, I see this is going up and this happening. Well, maybe that's related to something else and you start to put some of those ideas together. And you can see how that huge runup in farm income in one year between 2009 and 2010 it almost doubled from \$4 billion to \$8 billion for...yeah. The next one that we put in here just because some people...we all have different perceptions of what agriculture income comes from. And these are gross receipts, cash receipts, they aren't net, and you can see that until 2008 or so, crops were considerably less, maybe a million or a billion or half a billion dollars less than livestock. And then between 2007 to 2010 they were about the same and now that gap is widened again, where Nebraska gets many more receipts from livestock than it does from crops. And again, these are gross receipts, not net receipts. So that's the planning database. That's how we started off with the committee. And there are number of other items in there. I'm not going to look through everything, but just to give you an idea of how that looks. Then we have some other reports that we've looked at. And you can see that there are some QuickFacts--and I'll cover a little bit of that--that come from the American Community Survey. And that looks at specific legislative districts and it has considerable information in it and it'll compare legislative districts. Then there is some Selected Characteristics where we have rankings and that of the legislative districts. We have some characteristics for counties and for the city of Omaha, in Lincoln and Grand Island we have census tract information. And then we have some more specialized information that was asked for. Some senators wanted some special information about children in the labor force...whose parents are in the labor force, because they were looking at three- and four-year-olds to see the need for early childhood and so we have that information. And then we had a senator who was really interested in poverty with children, so we have some of that that we've been...kept adding. And then we've got the Web site. But this will show you one of the charts that we have from QuickFacts, and this looks at the change in population. And the information is an average of five years, because it's...the census does a sample, but there's never enough information to present it every year for reliability, so there's a sample. And you can see that District 39 has added over

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that time period about 7,000 people compared to District--what is that--8 has lost 1,500 people. On average, it's been around 900 people per district. And so the point of that is that if you're in the district in one of the top ones, you're likely to have your district get smaller when 2020 census comes around. And if you're in one of the ones below the state average, you're likely to have your district increased in size. As we know, one of the districts in western Nebraska was moved into Sarpy County with the 2010 redistricting. And so this gives you an idea to see, well, which districts are growing and where is the growth in the state going to happen? You can see District 49 that was moved is one of the fastest growing still. So that will give you an idea what the future might look like as far as where the power or legislative power in the state is going to shift. Right now, around 54 percent of the state's population are in Douglas, Sarpy, and Lancaster County. And they have 25 of the 24 legislative districts. Another report that we have is called Selected Characteristics. And we have a number of different variables that we have ranked by legislative district. And so this one we have up here is just an example and that's, "Persons' with Bachelor's Degrees as a Percentage of the Population 25 and Older." And you can see statewide Nebraska is about the same as the U.S. But within the state, District 4 almost 60 percent of the population over 25 has at least a bachelor's degree, down to District 11, which it's about 12 percent. You can see that there's a huge variety as far as...or variability as far as bachelor's degrees. And if we look at other variables...and I'm not going to go through all of them. I do have a PowerPoint where I could go through all of those if that's the committee's interest, but this just gives you an idea of what the "Selected Characteristics" book looks like and where we have comparisons by legislative district. And I think we include the U.S. and Nebraska, so you can see where your district falls and how it compares to the U.S. and how it compares to Nebraska. Then we do a similar thing in looking at Nebraska counties, so you can see that we roughly have an equal number of counties in each one of those four categories. We've divided the state into four groupings of about equal numbers and the red has the highest education level and the blue has the lowest education level. And then we also have a ranking table that shows the ranking for each county and we've included it on here. So you can see the highest county with bachelor's degrees is Dawes County.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Scheer I think had a question.

JERRY DEICHERT: Oh, sorry.

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SENATOR SCHEER: Is there...out of curiosity, I'm looking at the districts that have lost population. The two that have lost the most are actually in Omaha. Is there...can you speak to that at all, why?

JERRY DEICHERT: I'm not...I really have not looked at those in particular. But I think they're kind of in the central city and there's kind of an aging in the population, so. One of the things that we've noticed in...like in Ralston, for example, and some on west side an area where you had population that was booming say 30 years ago, well, those kids have graduated, they've moved out. And so the parents are there and so they're losing...they're not growing or losing population simply because they're aging and so you've got...

SENATOR SCHEER: It hasn't turned over yet.

JERRY DEICHERT: It hasn't turned over yet. And we see that in many different parts of the city where you've got pockets that had grown like 30, 40 years ago and now are...the kids have moved out, you might have one person living in the household now and so, and they just haven't changed yet.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Record to reflect that Senator Hansen has joined us.

JERRY DEICHERT: And so the other thing that we've done on the county maps is we've included the legislative district boundaries so you can see what your legislative district boundary would be. And you can look at your boundary to see which parts of it has the highest education, at least at the county level. We've done the same things for Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties. On the map it doesn't show it that way because it'd just be a big, black mass of lines. But we've got a different one I'll show you on the next slide. But you can see where the...now if you look at the patterns, where are the highest education levels, which counties have those and which have the lowest. And with the exception of Arthur County, every one of the ones with the highest education level have some kind of a educational...higher educational institution located in them. And that's why, obviously, Dawes is the highest with Chadron State.

_____: There's only six people in Arthur County.

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JERRY DEICHERT: In Arthur County, with a little over 400 people, it's...then we have the same thing with the Douglas and Sarpy Counties. And you can see we've superimposed the legislative districts on those and you can see again where you have the highest education levels and the lowest education levels. And then we have the same thing with Lancaster County. And because Hall County is now a metropolitan county, it...we include that because it also has a number of different legislative districts. It has three of them in Hall County, so we've included a breakout of Hall County, too, so you can see where the highest education levels are in Hall County.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Jerry, you just used the term metropolitan county. Could you just give a overview as to what those grades of counties are and how they are defined?

JERRY DEICHERT: Sure. Okay. There are two types of counties that the Office of Management and Budget have defined. One is metropolitan, and it has a county with a town of at least 50,000 people and it looks at commuting patterns. And if more than 25 percent of the population in neighboring counties commute into that county, it's part of the metropolitan area. So once Grand Island hit 50,000, Hall County became a...Grand Island became a metropolitan area and then it brought in, let's see, it's Hamilton, Howard, and Merrick Counties. And so Dannebrog is now a metropolitan...in the metropolitan area, but it's because of commuting into Hall County. And then there's the Lincoln metropolitan area, which is Lancaster and Seward. And then Omaha, which includes Douglas, Sarpy, Washington, Cass, and--did I say Saunders?--Saunders, and then it has three counties in Iowa. And then Sioux City picks up Dakota and Dixon County. And so there are really four metropolitan areas in Nebraska. Then there is a relatively recent definition called micropolitan. And if that county has a town of 10,000, that county is a micropolitan area and it also includes counties that commute. So Scottsbluff, Lexington, Beatrice, Hastings, Kearney, Norfolk, Columbus--and I said Beatrice--and Fremont are all called micropolitan counties (sic: areas). And some of the areas include some of the neighboring counties, like North Platte picks up...I think it picks up Arthur and McPherson and whatever the other northern county is. So those are those two concepts: metropolitan and micropolitan. Then beginning in 2012, once the database was established and people were looking at it, they had questions just like you've had. Well, why do we have so many local governments? Or why do we have some of these kinds of issues that the data have generated? And so the committee then said, well, can you do a brief report on it? We're not doing a big policy study or anything else, it's just kind of a 4- or

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5-, maybe 6-page overview of some of the issues, what the data show, and then what some other people have done, without any particular recommendations. And we call those policy briefs. And as it says, it's intended to identify and explore in greater depth some of the issues identified by the evidence presented. And one of the policy briefs that we did was that one on children where all parents in the labor force, because that was an issue that somebody wanted to know. Well, what is that? You know, some counties, 70 percent, 75 percent, 80 percent of the kids under six, all of their parents are in the labor force. And so there was an issue of what do...how do...does the state have responsibility for those kids? And so that's where that came from. As I said, the policy briefs do not recommend specific policies, but describe options and considerations that deal with the issues. One of the ones that we've gotten that's gotten quite a bit of...has generated a lot of interest and the World-Herald even...and picked up on that looking at...when we did...the committee also asked us to do population projections, so we've done population projections for all the counties and I can show you where you can get access to those. But one of the things that happens is we know that the 65 and older population and 75 and 85 and older population is going to increase in the next 20, 30 years. And if the Medicaid usage remains the same for those populations, then in the next 20 or 30 years there's going to be a big increase in demand on Medicaid. And the most expensive placement is nursing home placement. And if we don't do something about nursing home placement, there's going to be a big increase in cost. And so that was one of the...that was kind of the crux of the article and the World-Herald picked up on that. And this lists the policy briefs that we presented last year. And so one look at the energy burden...by energy burden, it was just looking at household energy costs, not including transportation. Looking a some issue about transportation needs. Looked at the community development block grant program. Assessing the consequences of Colorado's legalization of recreational marijuana on Nebraska, and there was some look at the impact of agricultural assessment. And Craig Maher, who is also working with us, he had a prior commitment so he couldn't come today. But we've put on...one of the things that he looked at...and I think this also kind of relates to the ag value and the ag income that we showed recently. And now as income comes down, something might happen to this. But you can see that ag land grew from 24 percent of valuation in 2007 to 45 percent in 2015. So you can see the valuation increased about 40 percent or no, more, 80 percent and residential went down from 52 percent to 36 percent. So look at that. And then the next slide just shows you the...how agricultural levies and valuation included or increased as a percent of the total for the state. And he had some...in that report he

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did look at what some of the other states were doing, what some of the other options were, and how they addressed some of those issues. Okay. So that's a quick overview of the types of information that we've put together for the committee over the years. If you would like, I can take you to their Web site and show you what the specific reports look like. Oh, and one other thing I'm going to mention. You can see where--oh, how did we lose that?--you can't see that on your screen, can you? It's on this one. Oh, we had that problem last time, didn't we? Anyway, we have an Annual Data Users Conference and we will send out the invitations shortly. But all of your staff members or you, too, are also invited to attend free of charge for this annual conference. And this year we're going to be looking at a number of issues in particular. Housing is going to be an issue, the 2020 census is going to be an issue, and we have a couple of other things that we're going to be looking at.

SENATOR RIEPE: Jerry, is that an all-day?

JERRY DEICHERT: That's an all-day. We used to have it where you could get access on the Web, but it...for an all-day conference, it just was...it really didn't work out to anybody's benefit. So it was...it cost us more to put it up and get it going than we thought was benefiting, so.

SENATOR SCHEER: What day was that?

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Sixteenth, August 16.

JERRY DEICHERT: It's August 16. So under programs we have the Nebraska State Policy Initiative. And I think maybe since this isn't working, let me go...I'll just show you how it's structured and you can see that we have all of the database reports and other reports are listed here. But we have special profiles for every legislative district. And so if you have a legislative district you want me to look at I'll look at that one first. I'll look at Senator Schumacher's District 22.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And this is found under that URL that's in our materials?

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JERRY DEICHERT: That's under that URL that's in there. And so District 22...well, I'll go back along here...we have just a page that we have in the report. And that shows the total population and it compares District 22 to the state for the first period, which is 2008 through 2012, that average. And then '11 through '15. And then we have a number of other...anybody know how to make this...is this...can you see that better? So we have the population under three, under five, and this is just a quick snapshot. Other age, you can see the white, not Hispanic, or majority population, what percent that is by race and ethnicity. You can see how many are foreign born. High school graduate, bachelor's degree, median household income, and it's all in the most recent year, so 2015. We have the poverty, labor force participation, unemployment rate, and then as I said, children under six with all parents in the labor force. So you can see that District 22, 80 percent of the kids under six, all of their parents are in the labor force either working or looking for work. And then compared to the state at 72 percent. Owner occupied housing unit. Again, another one that, as I said, children under or three and four that are enrolled in school and how many of those are enrolled in public or private school and then some health insurance questions.

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: With your income levels, is that like...is that AGI or is that gross income?

JERRY DEICHERT: That is gross. That's household income. So it's people...it includes earnings, wages and salaries, or proprietor's income, any kind of cash income. So it's essentially cash income.

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Gross income.

JERRY DEICHERT: Yeah, it's gross income. It's not...yeah.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: That was Senator Craighead. Senator Watermeier.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you, Chairman. Jerry, I guess I'll have to back up a couple of pages here.

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JERRY DEICHERT: Sure.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: You had mentioned it was 2016 policy briefs on your...

JERRY DEICHERT: Uh-huh.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I'm just curious so I went to the Web site. I couldn't come up with the first one or the last one just see if I could come up with anything.

JERRY DEICHERT: We...those...the 2016...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: These are different?

JERRY DEICHERT: No. We haven't put those up...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay.

JERRY DEICHERT: ...because we...it's been one of those...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: That's fine. I just wondered if I wasn't (inaudible).

JERRY DEICHERT: No, no. We don't have all of the 2016, that most recent information up for a number of reasons. But one of the things I think we've talked about is that it's easier for us just to put everything up now than trying to work through and get it up on the statehouse Web site. So we will get that, but that's...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I'm just not used to looking through this, so (inaudible).

JERRY DEICHERT: Yeah. But the other ones, I'll show you how to get to those.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: It's pretty easy to (inaudible).

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JERRY DEICHERT: And so you can see the other ones, the other years. Everything else is there, it's just that that had not been...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay.

JERRY DEICHERT: And then we have detailed information that the Census Bureau has on where we pulled all this. And so you can see...is this not going to let me? This won't let me enlarge it. But I'll just kind of show you. On detail on social it has family structure and household structure so you might find this useful that in District 22, 29 percent, almost 30 percent of the households consist of one person. So three out of every ten households have only one person living in them. So if you're thinking about providing services, this is...I talk about for local governments. If you're thinking about providing services and you count your population, well, you've got a lot of people that are living by themselves and so you've got services and not a high population density. The other thing that I find interesting just out of my own curiosity, is it also lists ancestry of the population. So if you want to know is Gothenburg really the Swede or Swedish capital of the state, you can go in and look and see, well, what percent of their population said they were Swedish and you can see. This district has...well...has probably one of the highest Czech populations in the state with 3,000. Anyway, so there are all of those detailed information and you can look at that. And it has it for 2015 and '14 and we can see it also has detailed for economic characteristics, housing characteristics, and demographic is age, race, those kinds of things. Then if we look down below, this is where we have all of the policy briefs. And I think, Senator Watermeier, you probably found all of those. And then we have some of the specific reports. So rather than go through this, let me see if I can go back on...so that did not pop back up (inaudible). Okay. So I can go...I did bring in something just in case. I've done these enough that I know something is going to happen that it doesn't work, so. Okay, this shows those charts from that one legislative district book and if I can get that going here. Okay, so...

SENATOR SCHEER: What district are you looking at?

JERRY DEICHERT: Now, this is all of the legislative districts on this chart. And it shows the total population. So you can see District 39 had 43,000 population and District 47 has 35,000 people. And you can see that those dash lines by the one person one vote says, each legislative

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district has to be within 10 percent is the maximum variation. And so those lines show where the differences are. And so if it's below the line it's smaller than the 10 percent and if it's above the line it's above 10 percent. So the ones that are above the line are District 39, 10, 21, 27, 5, and 37. And the ones that are too small now are 47, 11, 42, 16, and 24.

SENATOR SCHEER: Where was it? Is it found on the...like the Web?

JERRY DEICHERT: It's in the County Characteristics report that...but that one...all the 2016 reports aren't up because we hadn't gone through and gotten them up. So this is just to show you what it would look like. And then...

SENATOR VARGAS: Sorry, this is Senator Vargas. Can you remind me again when those will be up?

JERRY DEICHERT: I'll put them up next week.

SENATOR VARGAS: Oh, okay. Fantastic. Thank you.

SENATOR SCHEER: Jerry, one of the more interesting graphs that we had I thought from last year--I'm not sure if it was a graph or a chart--that showed the projected growth for the year 2050, by I think it was county or maybe legislative district. But it was the idea that the population trends follow based upon births and deaths and how, absent immigration, how we can fairly accurately know where we're going to be at a point in the future.

JERRY DEICHERT: Let's see if I've got that here. I guess I don't have that handy right now. I'm sorry. That will be...next time we'll talk about...anyway, the point is, that in...right now about half the counties in the state have more deaths than births in a year. And by 2030 or so, for the white population...there will be more deaths than births for the entire population and the state is going to be losing population...the white...not on Hispanic population. Right now we are basically holding our own. The growth of the state is because we have Latino, African-American, and other populations moving into the state and they are a younger population and so we have kids. And so that's where the growth in the state is right now. I'm sorry that that didn't...for some

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reason or other this PowerPoint is not...okay, so. I think we've looked at that. Then if we look at where is the housing value growing, which district? And you can see nationally over that time period the U.S. lost \$8,000 per housing unit. The fastest growing value is in District 39, grew at \$11,000. And the state, on average, grew \$2,500 and you can see District 39, 17. And then the slowest growing or the biggest declining is District 3, where housing lost \$10,000 per unit. Then these are looking at population by age. So for the child population under 18, District 5 has the highest percentage of kids. And District 6 has the lowest percentage. And the variation is from 32 percent to 18 percent. So you can see, that's a big difference. Nebraska has a slightly higher percentage than the U.S. If you look at 65 and older, District 41 has 21 percent of its population 65 and older. District 46 only has 6 percent. And Nebraska is pretty close to the state. If you look at minority population, District 11 is almost 75 percent and District 41 is 3 percent. Foreign-born population, District 7 is 27 percent and District 41 is less than 1 percent. And the reason why the committee originally was interested in this is because you can see state average is 6.6 percent and that really doesn't tell the story at all when you're looking at individual legislative districts. They vary considerably. This is the high school education. For the most part, it's over 90 percent, but you have District 7 and 5 where it's 70 percent or less for the high school graduates. And the highest is District 25 at 98 percent. Bachelor's degrees, I think I've showed you that one before. Poverty, poverty ranges from almost 40 percent in District 11 down to about 4 percent in District 39.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: One other thing, Jerry, on poverty is how is poverty defined?

JERRY DEICHERT: Poverty is defined by family size and by income. And so there's poverty thresholds set for every size of family. So a one-person household the threshold is around \$11,000, if I remember. Don't quote me on that, but it's that. And then it goes all the way up to four, so it's a combination of family size and income and it only includes cash income. It doesn't look at a value of food stamps nor does I look at costs like healthcare costs or other things. So it's just strictly cash income.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: So basically, if you have a job that will...and only one person, one child in a household and then the job produces some income, they cannot be in poverty. But add

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another child or two because the family grows, they suddenly become in poverty as a result of increased children in the house.

JERRY DEICHERT: That's right. And the other thing that it shows, too, is that...we don't have it on the chart, but in the tables you look at between 150 percent of poverty and 200 percent. So you look at the people that are in that category, too. The number that are nearly in poverty.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Riepe.

SENATOR RIEPE: Thank you, Senator. Of course, I know that there's been a lot more discussion about poverty in the rural that's sort of been unidentified or maybe not emphasized as much as urban poverty. I know we could take this and by districts go through there and identify that out. I guess looking in the aggregate, have you looked at that and said this is designated as a quote unquote rural district and this is an urban district? And how does that poverty look? And how does that look in relationship to cost of living and those kinds of things? I sense that we may be looking beyond the rural poverty that's out there.

JERRY DEICHERT: Yeah. Senator, you're correct. When we look at it, on average there's no difference. You know, you might...you'll have pockets in different areas and so, yeah. But there are rural areas that are as poor as any of the urban areas. But again, when you look at the aggregate you don't see that. You see it...so when you look at these legislative districts, even within those legislative districts, it hides a lot of things.

SENATOR RIEPE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Okay, thank you.

JERRY DEICHERT: And then we have the same thing for children under 5...under 18, I guess in this one. And again, the highest is 55 percent for District 11. The lowest is 2.4 percent for District 25. And income, this is one that always surprises me, is the highest is District 4 at just under...it's on \$96,000 and District 11 it's \$25,000. I won't go through all of these, because I think your time is limited. But the percent of children under six with all parents in the labor force, the highest is 84 percent where all of the kids under five their parents are either working or looking for work. So if it's a single parent, it's that parent. Or if it's two parents, both of them are.

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And District 7 is the lowest at 57 percent. So I think that's...I think Senator Kolowski was the one who was interested in looking at that as well as Senator Harms. And the percentage owner occupied, it ranges from 84 percent in District 4 down to a little over 37 percent in District 46.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: On the slide just previous where you have like 57 percent in one district that don't have a...or a parent in the work force to the higher one, 85 percent, is there any way we can correlate between the ones that have working parents and how they perform in grades one through three, for example, as compared to that district where the parents are at home, so that we can get an idea is there a cause or relationship between having a parent in the work force probably at a lower paying job and how the kids do in school?

SENATOR VARGAS: I want your answer.

JERRY DEICHERT: I'm not aware of anything that looks at educational performance by legislative district.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Okay.

JERRY DEICHERT: You know, you've got something at the county level and school district level, but I don't know that anything looks at it by the legislative district level.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Vargas.

SENATOR VARGAS: There is...to my knowledge, there isn't any specific data that you can pull that just for Nebraska. There's national data that shows that. There was a report that just came out from the Buffett Early Childhood Institute called Parenting Matters that provides national data on the impact of having parents in the work force and educational achievement levels, but that would be really interesting to see county by county or district by district.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And that's kind of the thing that as we get farther along here in trying to look at what policies we might want to ask to be introduced and considered up on the floor and in the committee is with that work force situation, is that dramatic impact if we have

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both people working and having to work that it has a actionable enough impact on educational scores and performance that we should be concerned about. Senator Stinner.

SENATOR STINNER: Right along with that is the daycare, childcare centers, and we do have a scoring system for those. We could start to correlate some of those areas that have childcare centers or daycare centers that score the highest, at least on the early childhood side, and try to bring those forward so that we could put more emphasis from a policy side to build that early childhood centers or early childhood education within communities, so.

SENATOR VARGAS: That was Senator Stinner speaking.

SENATOR STINNER: I had my hand up.

SENATOR VARGAS: Oh, you did? I didn't know if you said your name.

SENATOR STINNER: And he did acknowledge me.

SENATOR VARGAS: Okay.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And then that was Senator Vargas speaking.

SENATOR SCHEER: This is Senator Scheer stating that Vargas was not (inaudible).

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Jerry, go ahead.

JERRY DEICHERT: But this one kind of gets at that somewhat. What Senator Stinner was pointing out was that District 39, 65 percent of the kids, we don't know if their parents are in the work force, but we know that 65 percent of the kids aged three and four are attending some type of school. And District 9, it's only 21 percent. And so you can see, again, between...almost 66 percent and 21 percent, you can see there's a big variation among districts.

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SENATOR VARGAS: It's Senator Vargas. I'm pretty sure we could probably superimpose this over the high school graduation and we'll see some very interesting trends.

JERRY DEICHERT: And then we have the population without insurance. And the highest is District 7 at 27 percent and the lowest is District 25 at 3.2 percent. And when it says in here...in all the reports we have the definitions, but noninstitutionalized population, obviously, they don't look at military, they don't look at people in nursing homes. It looks at just the population living in households, because they don't look at people living in those institutions. And, lastly, is looking at the population that have some type of means-tested program, Medicaid or some other means tested. And it goes from 38 percent, almost 39 percent in District 11 down to 4.3 percent in District 31.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Schumacher. One of the things that we have had not much success with in this committee over the...since it's been developed is, you can see there's a lot of really good data. And it doesn't take very long at looking at that data before you get kind of a clue of what's driving it and what might be able to be done to make a change in the data or what we should address. We have seen the data, but we have not been able to translate it into action that actually takes affect in policy. And that probably is, for the next decade of this committee, the biggest challenge that it faces. How do you see what is fairly obvious, separate it out from the political clatter that governs us in the reactionary kind of way that we deal with legislation? And how do we say, look at, we looked at the data, appreciate our credibility folks on the floor, and here's what we think we need to do to take advantage of the data or fix the problem or abandon the ship in this area or a policy change that this data is driving that's neither left or right, up or down, but just what reality is? And we have not had much luck in that. And somehow as we see the data today and tomorrow and ask the questions and get the data in from the research and the thinking, how do we make that step? And just from what we saw today, which is just kind of a almost a tip of the iceberg what's out there, you begin to get some pretty good ideas of what's going on in the state and whether or not it's possible for us to change any of it. And if we do, to plug resources to change it where they might be most effectively deployed. And that's a hard thing to...we probably should try to start policymaking direction.

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SENATOR STINNER: So do we start with a list of items, like out migration, housing issues, work force development? Do we list those down and then see what type of data we have and try to start to match some of those things up or...it seems to be a little bit unwieldy for me to try to put this together. I'm trying to connect dots to issues.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: One thing I think, we're probably too early in the process in this first meeting to really know how we try to wrestle that animal. But in the past I've found it helpful at least--I don't what Senator Riepe has found and maybe he can share a little bit with us--is that when we have some of these questions and how to ask Jerry, because chances are buried in this somewhere is the answer to those questions. And if not, they probably can be gleaned from what data there is. We have not done a good job with correlating what has this got to do with that in any mathematical way. That would be very helpful. There's a high correlation between people doing poorly in school and both parents working. Those kind...that kind of data is useful. Senator Riepe.

SENATOR RIEPE: I just want to comment. I think some of it came back to the very same thing, Senator Stinner, that you were talking about in the budget. It's a matter of identifying priorities in trying to...because it's almost chicken and an egg, where do you start? We've had conversations over the last couple of years about how much support can we provide to a village--I'll call it that--of a few hundred people as opposed to trying to concentrate populations. And that sounds like picking winners and losers and that may be what has to happen just from an economic standpoint, but that's pretty politically delicate. I remember the first meeting I came to, one of the things I said right off and I was told to stuff it was, we have 93 counties in the state of Nebraska. Can we support 93 counties? I think those are a lot of those smaller governments. But that's a little dangerous conversation because everyone, including my district, wants to protect what they have. But we have to figure out maybe the top five and go...how do we start? Where do we start? We hear a lot of...but just where do we start?

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And that's one of the reasons we invoked academic freedom at the beginning. We could argue about those things and not necessarily have to believe what we're saying, but we're exploring an idea. The highly controversial thing that Senator Riepe just brought out, this data will show and the census data will show that of those communities under

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500 in population, their peak day, their prime day was in the 1920s when that was the place where you had to go to get the blacksmith to shoe the horse and that was about as far as the Model T could drive and that was the peak. And it's been downhill ever since in the vast majority of them. So that begins to tell us what the future of those communities are within that hurricane track of where they're probably going to be 50 years from now.

JERRY DEICHERT: May I...this is Jerry. May I add, one of the things that we've done with the funding that we've received is we've gone...when there's been a topic like that. For example, the one on the issue on marijuana and some of those from last year, is that we've gone to faculty at UNO and UNL and UNMC and had...used some of that funding to pay for work that they were doing and we might help support a graduate student or something else so we can get some of this information. So if you have a topic that is of an interest we can...we'll take some of that to get somebody to do some small study. It's not going to be a major research study, but it is something that will address some of those issues. And if you'll look at some of the previous reports you can see how they've come out. So that's one of the things that we've done with that funding.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Scheer.

SENATOR SCHEER: Is there any data anywhere that tells us the communities that are no longer there over the last 50 years and spot them? I mean, I guess that's how you define it. I mean, there may be a community that technically still has a post office so it has a zip code or whatever, but if it's gone from 1,300 people, as Paul said, to 82 people and the grocery store is a Casey's type deal.

JERRY DEICHERT: One of the things that...when maybe next time I can bring that. We've got lists of every city that ever existed in Nebraska from 1860 through 2010 and showing how their population has changed. And so you can see that the cutoff is about 5,000. If the town is above 5,000 it's more likely to grow than not. If it's below 5,000 it's more likely to lose population than grow, unless it's close to another city. So yeah, we have that information and can share that with you.

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SENATOR SCHUMACHER: What would be helpful--and I tried doing it myself and I'm not a good enough artist or with the thing--but taking that data, the population change, and putting it out on a map. And for the time that I did spend trying to do that, it became pretty clear and you could almost say, oh, I see why this trend exists in this area and why a different trend exists in this area. By gosh, the interstate is running through this area and the changes are a little different. And you begin to get a pretty good feel for what is making the thing make those changes. And where there's no interstate, no population center, the population is dropping. Well, you know the farms are getting bigger, that's what's happening. And you begin to get a feel or at least a theory in the back of your head for what's probably making the thing tick in this area. So this...it's very interesting stuff and you begin to form an opinion of what it works like. Senator Scheer.

JERRY DEICHERT: Senator Scheer, (inaudible) interrupting. This is a map that shows for counties what year the highest census was, where their peak population was. And so you can see that the green, the peak population was 2010. That kind of freckled pink, the peak population was in 1900 or 1890. And the green lines, the peak population was in 2000. And then that kind of pink, the peak population was either in 1970 or...or '60 or '80. And so you can see, with the exception of those counties with larger populations, those are the only ones that have had their peak population in 2010. And you can see a lot of the states had their peak population prior to 1930.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Stinner.

SENATOR STINNER: Jerry, I've always been interested in trying to break out--and you probably have this--production agriculture with agribusiness. Agribusiness predominantly goes on volume. It's the transportation fees, it's the co-op that sells the fertilizer and seed that is not necessarily directly impacted by production agriculture. Is there a breakout of those?

JERRY DEICHERT: There is. We've not...that data is available. We've not done any really big work on that, but I know Eric in Bureau of Business Research, they've done some work on looking at the impact of production agriculture. And so, yeah, we've not done that, but I know that's been done.

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SENATOR STINNER: Okay, because when we look at revenue in total and as it comes in, about 4 percent is directly related to production agriculture; the rest is probably agribusiness. I just would like to know what those numbers look like.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: I guess we're kind of in a...Senator Williams.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Thank you. Just a comment, and I agree with what you're talking about, Paul, about the fact that we've not ended up with action items and understanding. Even when you take a quick look at those statistics there are significant differences by geography, by legislative district, and all these kind of things. Shouldn't part of our goal be to recognize that state government can't solve every problem that's out there? We can have influence on some. But how can we share this information in a meaningful way with those people that are in Custer County, those people that are in whatever, so that they can recognize that some of these issues if they are recognized can be addressed locally by people that care, by organizations that want to do that? But I'm not sure that, even though this information is clearly available at the push of a button, if that's getting distributed and used out there. And I would think that would be a pretty simple goal for us to try to solve that becomes...

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: I think that actually some trips have been made out.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: I know you've done some of that.

JERRY DEICHERT: Yeah, and we're willing to do that. What we typically do is we'll show something like some of the big state trends, but then we'll look at your specific...for example, let me just show you this. I don't have the one that we've done, but this is a...

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Stinner.

SENATOR STINNER: I know the Panhandle has an initiative right now amongst all the counties. They get together and I think they are accessing data from the University of Nebraska at Omaha to try to put together some kind of comprehensive plan that has to do with work force, it has to do with jobs, and it has to do with attracting and retaining people, those types of things

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that we talk about. And it's kind of a regional view of things. So I think they have...they've got a lot of the information that you showed us today to try to guide them and help them in their decisionmaking.

JERRY DEICHERT: We can put together like a half-hour, 45-minute presentation that looks at the trends for a county, for a legislative district, and show where does your county rank and whatever your values and then show them how to get access to...easily get access to some more profiles, yeah.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Okay.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: This is Senator Schumacher again. Is there any effort or mechanism by which this information can be disseminated with the local extension agent? I mean, the university has got those people out there, they're on the payroll, and they usually have pretty good local community connections. It just takes a lot of expense for you to travel out to Arthur, Nebraska, to make a presentation or farther out to Kimball. But they probably have an extension agent there. And should some of this...should we make some effort to disseminate this information to the local government using...by getting all the extension agents together--at least one from each county--and say, look, here's the thing, you go make the presentation. We'll school you down at the university in Omaha, but this is available and you're the liaison between the local chamber and the local bank or school board or whatever and the folks in Omaha. This is just too good not to share.

JERRY DEICHERT: The other thing we could do is we could...I've done this before, where I've done it on-line and over the phone and had somebody put it up on PowerPoint or whatever and then show it and then kind of walk through and do it over the phone. And you know, there are many ways we can do that now, Skype and whatever. I mean, we can do some of those things now a little bit better without having to physically there.

SENATOR SCHEER: Where is this at, your Web site?

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JERRY DEICHERT: This is not part of the legislative things that we've done, we just presented that separately. But I can...if you're interested I can send you...this report I'll present next time. I think I've got that. And I sent that to Peg, if she wants to share that.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Vargas.

SENATOR VARGAS: This is...it's really (inaudible). I think what would be the most...I'm intrigued at the ways that we can make this more digestible for people. I don't know if there's ways to connect some of the data to make it more interactive for it to be on-line, because otherwise it's...all the people look at me like, well, what do I do now? What comes...I'm an average citizen and now I know that my population has decreased in my area, I have pockets of poverty near me, and the elderly population is growing, and our tax base for people is decreasing. What do I...does this mean for me? Does this...it's a long way, unless there is...I don't know. I just don't want to...if we can make more meaning out of some of the data visually where...I don't know if someone could look on their address and then they can zoom in and then pick specific topics, like the poverty level, household income, job projected growth in their area, that would be better than simply just looking at each of the different maps individually and coming up with independent (inaudible).

SENATOR SCHEER: And a lot of this is by your district though.

SENATOR VARGAS: It is by your district, yeah. Well, (inaudible), even if it's by your district

SENATOR SCHEER: And a lot of that is. If you go to their link that they sent us...

SENATOR VARGAS: Yeah, it will show you all the numbers by your district, like you were showing.

JERRY DEICHERT: Senator Vargas, and what...if, you know, if one of your staff members...and we'll do a training, too, sometime this year, but you can do that with census data. You can put in your...type in your street address and then it will show you where you can go in and get...like those tables that I showed you, all that information. So yes, that...

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SENATOR VARGAS: And it's less, maybe, the tables, it's more...like for example, for OPS we have a open data so you can get more...it's not enough just to go and then be able to pull a table or a PDF that shows all this information and data. I don't think the average person knows how to adjust all of that unless they've been exposed to it and they all have college education or what have you. It's digging in deeper and making more meaning of some of the tables and the maps. I just don't know if there's a plan to do that. It might be a good pathway.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Williams.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Thank you. Jerry, can you drill down further so that if you take a legislative district or a county that...for instance, we've got a very unusual situation in my legislative district with a fairly large geographical area, but one community being Lexington, which is very different than the other...Gothenburg, Cozad, Broken Bow, Sargent, can you drill down to that?

JERRY DEICHERT: You could do cities, yes.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Okay.

JERRY DEICHERT: We just never...we don't have it on here, because we have not...we stopped at...

SENATOR WILLIAMS: But you can get that?

JERRY DEICHERT: You can get city.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Okay.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: We're approaching an area that is...or limitations are, over the last few years we've gradually acquired a budget for the Planning Committee and that, I think, got up to \$50,000, if I was remembering right, last year. This stuff all takes money. And in the context of things, not much money, but nevertheless, it takes money in order to develop the kind of thing

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that you're talking about doing or to figure out whether or not that kind of thing is going to be used by the town board of a town of 700 population, it probably won't. No matter how sophisticated it is, it may have a town of 5,000 population, but probably not at seven because that's just not how decisions are made. I mean, they want somebody to come talk to them. And...or leave something that is extremely easy for them to do because they're busy in those towns doing...I mean, those town board positions are volunteer positions and they show up for the meeting and pay the water bills and talk about whose dog is running at large and whether the water tower needs to be fixed. So, but any one of these things takes money. And I don't know what little in capacity we have if we try to stay at \$25,000 in order to get some of these wish lists fulfilled. And maybe we should have a discussion, the committee here, how much money...how much is this worth to the state, to the Legislature? Should we be looking at where we were last year instead of \$25,000? Is this a priority? Jerry, what's your impression on what it takes? I mean...

JERRY DEICHERT: The thing is, what we've been doing is using the money to pay for...our time we just donate because we do some of this stuff anyway. But what we've been doing is using it to get other resources and we found that we can do quite a bit with graduate students. And faculty are willing to do things for a nominal fee if they know it's going to be useful. If it's their area of research, they've got a way of getting information to you, they'll, in an informal setting like this where they don't have to be testifying and everything else, I think we found...we've never had any problem with getting faculty to do something at a fairly nominal fee. And so, yeah, we can do that. But yet, if...again, we could put together something quite a bit more extensive if we did have some additional funding. I was just trying to show you the...following up on Senator Vargas, and for some reason or other I can't get this to load up, I can see it on my screen, but it doesn't pop up on these screens. We do have a dashboard set up...

SENATOR STINNER: These two voted against it, so I was outvoted.

JERRY DEICHERT: We do have it, Senator Vargas, we do have a dashboard set up where you can look at...right now we just have it set up for poverty where you can go in and zero in on an area and see how it's changed over time and...but I don't...

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SENATOR VARGAS: I can get that, that's helpful.

JERRY DEICHERT: So anyway, and so you can look at the state, compare Nebraska to every other state and those things and that's where we're going. We're trying to build more dashboards so that people can do that. And that's what we've done with the funding we had this year was working on dashboards.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And so those are the kind of things that we drop \$50,000 to \$25,000 we're going to do without, basically. What are we not going to be able to do so our expectations for when we ask you to check on something are too high?

JERRY DEICHERT: Well, probably won't be able to get a lot of other studies done, because we're going to be...probably putting most of this into...we've got a student worker who is going to be doing the dashboards, trying to get some...you know, like those...like those graphs for the legislative districts, have those up so somebody can go in and look and say I'm interested in poverty, what can I see? Or I'm interested in age, see what I can see and see those various...they won't be the interactive, but they will still bring that information in.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Vargas.

SENATOR VARGAS: I was just curious about process, and Senator Stinner mentioned is it best for us to prioritize? Have we...how we prioritize, how it's been done in the past?

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: In the past, if my recollection is correct, we said, okay, we want to do a policy brief on whatever, transportation. And then we...that was produced and we discussed that and, basically, with Jerry's operation produced it. I don't recall we had a whole lot of discussion of specific issues. And we're now at a point where I think if we're going to try to take a translation and make a step between data and action that we probably need more discussion than consensus and an effort to try to bridge through in the future because none of this is going to get done in a two-year period. And if you just...right now we've got a pretty good mix, because you're new and we got...Senator Hansen and so we got an even batch. Where we ended up last year, we had almost all seniors on the committee...or juniors and seniors. Senator Scheer.

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SENATOR SCHEER: Well, I'm just wondering, looking at...going back to rules, and your suggestion to provide the committee with one or two priority bills, it almost seems that we need to maybe, as a committee, request that change again because, honestly, for it to be effective for any one of us to use a personal priority maybe would happen. I doubt it. So how can this committee provide some type of meaningful change or direction without some type of legislative ability inside of that?

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And that was Senator Gloor's suggestion from last year, and I think Senator Campbell, that's why that rule change was suggested that we have two priorities, then somewhere the Rules Committee got down to one priority and then it got all messed up in the rules debate and it was abandoned just so we could get on with business. But that's something that is a very legitimate request of the committee to make...

SENATOR SCHEER: But we'll have that ability, at the beginning of the session again to look at rules, so, I mean.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: I think that's something that we can surely look at. If we get a feeling that we're going to be able to really get to the point of being able to make a concrete recommendation of something or another based on (inaudible)...

SENATOR SCHEER: I guess from my advantage point, if we don't have the ability to do that, are we sort of spinning our wheels getting all the information put together, but if unless it becomes...most of what we're doing is going to affect District 7 a lot then maybe that's Tony's emphasis and his priority for the year, but if it's something that is not a district and not even a regional but a state impact, those are much harder to get individual senators to carry. Now there's always one of the Speaker priorities and that would be (inaudible).

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: But then we'd have to be in with the Speaker. (Laughter)

SENATOR SCHEER: Well, fair enough. But from a long-term basis...that's what I'm talking about, the committee has none, so...

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SENATOR STINNER: This one doesn't. But if those issues would go to a committee and become a priority of that committee, but that's a little...

SENATOR SCHEER: Yeah, but then you're taking a committee priority to another committee to try to get it to prioritize this.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: One of the discussions that we had and we ran out of time on it, and is whether or not this committee on its priority bills should have the power to advance it to the floor and not run through another committee. And that's a discussion we might have too, if we were actually looking at a rule change or something like that is should this committee say, look, this bill we've got consensus on in the committee and it is important and we'd like the Legislature to hear it and important enough to prioritize and put out on the floor; have the public hearing before this committee. That's something we could talk about too. Senator Vargas.

SENATOR VARGAS: I think you're right about having the priority bill. I thought about that before we started. This seems like it makes sense for us to have some ability to...otherwise we're just studying information and not getting to any action and that makes it really difficult. The other sort of comment I have is on how often...if we're not going to create new reports because it's not in the budget, which I can understand, whether or not it's worthwhile to look at some of the existing reports and then identify which ones we want to expand on data or then, to your point, correlate the existing data on top of each other as opposed to a different policy report just trying to make meaning of the correlations. I was looking at the tax comparison one last night, it's really helpful. You mentioned around our aging population and is outpacing our tax base population and at some point we're going to need to...so I was just thinking, well, we need more data beyond 2011 to look at how our tax comparisons are shaping up relative to our population growth. So I just don't know if that's like a worthwhile place to move at some point in the next couple of meetings--identify other studies to extend.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Williams.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: One other thing that we would have to consider when we're thinking about those priorities or be careful with, it's likely that if we start going down...let's take for

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example that we would determine that we need to do more work in legislative we could in an area that would be in the telecommunications area because of broadband out and that be a solution. We already have a committee that has sort of jurisdiction over that. So I think we would have to be sensitive to that, not that that would stop us, but if we move forward and find that what one of the things that we want to do, traditionally fits under another committee's jurisdiction, we'll just have to watch that I think.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Scheer.

SENATOR SCHEER: Well, I think part of the solution of that, Matt, is that it could still go through the traditional route from the advantage point of a hearing.

SENATOR STINNER: Yeah.

SENATOR SCHEER: But if we would at least have the ability to prioritize one or two, it doesn't make any difference if Paul introduces it on behalf of the committee...introduces it period. And then any one of us could bring back, gee, this fits in sort of the mode of what this committee is looking at. I just think for us to be able to maintain some type of forward momentum rather than this, as Tony was saying, just we continue to study the study. We have to have some mechanism to get some of this on the floor for discussion. Now, if the body doesn't want to do anything with it, fair enough, they don't like what we want to do with it, fair enough. At least it may stimulate other avenues or approaches as well.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Very good point. And even if it goes no...even goes nowhere on the floor, it is a way for us to communicate what we've learn and think is the right trend here and it might over a period of time have influence far more than what we have now. And that...and I think as we have a couple more of these sessions and begin to learn and get a feel for what we want to do, it will become clear. And I'm hopeful that we come to some consensus as to how to move forward strategically as a committee and as a way to translate from data to action. But it will take us a little bit to get our sea legs here, I think, but this was a good introductory session. I think, probably, everyone is getting close to the point...are you getting close to the point where

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you got other things on your agenda? Because this is productive, but if we're running out of a welcome here, which...

JERRY DEICHERT: May I ask a question? This is where we were going to go this year. This is following what Senator Vargas, and see if that's kind of what you want to do. So we started off with an initial time frame like 2008 to 2012 and we looked at...this is poverty again, by...and we could do this at the county level too. We have it into, roughly, equal numbers and we kept that range the same so the highest is 22 percent above. And if you look at it, you go...next year you can see how that red is moving. The next year you can see...and then...and so you can do that same with counties. So you can see where you're getting increases, where you're getting decreases, and you can just also just click on a color and you can see, okay, now where is the highest. Is that the kind of the way you were...one of the ways be interested in moving?

SENATOR VARGAS: Yeah, this is Senator Vargas. Yes, it's helpful. I just keep thinking about the actions, so I'm still trying to think about the correlations between different...poverty, yeah; but...move around, the other different components. This is fantastic.

JERRY DEICHERT: We would put other...we put others...that's the way we would go.

SENATOR VARGAS: Yeah.

JERRY DEICHERT: Is we would take the funds we have this year and do some of those kinds of things if that's the way the committee wanted us to go.

SENATOR VARGAS: Which I'm...I was just throwing out the idea. Navigation (inaudible).

JERRY DEICHERT: Yeah, it happens.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Next meeting time, what works for folks? If we do it a month from now, we're looking at about...

SENATOR SCHEER: Have you traditionally tried to use Fridays, Paul?

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SENATOR SCHUMACHER: What's that?

SENATOR SCHEER: Have you traditionally tried to use Fridays?

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: That seemed to be the sense of the group last...when we had a brief meeting at the end of the session that Fridays work, probably, fairly well which we could do it the 7th of July. Is that...?

SENATOR SCHEER: I don't disagree other than a lot of us will be closed Monday and Tuesday, we'll be playing catch up most the week. To take another day off...you as well, that are still working. If we could push it out to like the 14th, that would maybe...might help. That's, again, a Friday, but it gets...

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: The morning of the 14th?

SENATOR VARGAS: You don't want to spend 4th of July together, is that it? I'm just kidding.

SENATOR SCHEER: I know a number of companies and institutions are taking both the Monday and the 4th, making a long weekend. So when you come back trying to catch up for the week in three days, you take the Friday out then you're down to a two-day week.

SENATOR VARGAS: Just joking, but I agree with you. The 14th works for me.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Let's shoot for 9:00 on the 14th, the next one.

SENATOR STINNER: My July is just a disaster.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Could have it in Lexington at the Dawson County Fair that day. Or we could have it in Scottsbluff at the Oregon Trail Days, how's that?

SENATOR STINNER: That's a bigger celebration.

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SENATOR VARGAS: You could come to District 7 and you know where it fell in all those populations.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Watermeier.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: We'll plan on the 14th at 9:00 a.m.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Right. That looks like what the consensus is that works for...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Another question about the hearing...or the committee and having priority status to be able to kick out, the only hiccup I was thinking of last...when we were in session talking about this very thing is you have to go through the referencing process. So the referencing would actually have to get referenced to the Planning Committee and they would plan on having a noon hearing like Retirement does or Exec does, so you'd have that mechanism if you wanted to go down that route. You'd have to have the referencing actually get it to the Planning Committee if that's what you're talking about being able to...this body being able to vote something out. And by doing that we're going to have to create a new standing committee that would have the authority to have the hearing and be able to vote it out, because I'm not sure we have that committee.

SENATOR SCHEER: Well, if we...but even if we didn't do that, it could still be referenced, as Matt was saying, it could go to Transportation.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: But if we...

SENATOR SCHEER: Regardless, we would have the ability to prioritize (inaudible).

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Yeah, that I agree with. I think we've given ourselves one priority. Didn't we last year?

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: No, that's...

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: (Inaudible) two to one within (inaudible).

SENATOR SCHEER: We've never had any...we've never had any. We got it passed in part of the rules discussion, but when we finally adopted them, I just asked everybody if they would just simply (inaudible).

SENATOR WATERMEIER: So we switched that part of it off. So at least we've had that discussion on the floor, probably get that done again.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Yeah, I mean, that...there wasn't...but if we could get two priorities, that would be useful for the committee in future years, I think.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Yeah, I agree.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And I would...and as far as who actually holds the hearing, I would think that no matter what committee it was referred to would hold the hearing and they'd...if we requested them to advance the bill, I would think they'd give that request due deference.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: And the other question I had was for Jerry. On this August 16, you're saying we have an open invite to go to that?

JERRY DEICHERT: Yes.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I've got it on the calendar, but I know nothing more than that. So are you going to send out what it is?

JERRY DEICHERT: We'll send it out, yeah.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Is it in Omaha?

JERRY DEICHERT: It's in Omaha.

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay.

JERRY DEICHERT: And it's all day, includes lunch, and it's...we just haven't...we're having a hard time finalizing it because we're trying to work with the Census Bureau to get some folks out from Washington and their budget has been messed up too, obviously.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay.

JERRY DEICHERT: And so, but I think we...the date is finalized and I think everybody is finalized and so...

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay, I'll put it on the calendars.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Vargas.

SENATOR VARGAS: You said August 16 right?

JERRY DEICHERT: Yes.

SENATOR VARGAS: Okay. So we can send staff?

JERRY DEICHERT: Staff, yeah. I'll send out an invitation to the staff and with that on there and so they can fill out the forms because we have some computer training to learn how to do some of these things.

SENATOR VARGAS: Great, thank you.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Any other observations, thoughts, ideas which way we should head? Or you'd like to...most of you probably be on this committee for a number of years yet, directions that you'd like to kind of have us start laying the groundwork ahead. If you have any, let me know so we...because I'm a short-termer. Go ahead, Senator Vargas.

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SENATOR VARGAS: Well, I'll put this question, thank you, for the next meeting, is there anything that we want to do between now and then independently of ourselves to prepare for that? I know we talked last time that we would review the reports. We got the reports now. So we're saying...are we committing to reviewing some of the reports; figure out what we already like, and just trying to figure out what...if we have any outcomes that we're thinking about for our next meeting.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Scheer.

SENATOR SCHEER: On the information that we have, you've got displayed as Legislative District, and I'm thinking, going back to the earlier conversation, how do we get others involved in outstate. You really would need to have that more on a county level, probably, at best, to go talk to the different county commissioners or whatever, get a group together because when you broaden it, in some cases, you've got three, four, five counties in the legislative district, it's still bulk, but it would be nicer to have it more concentrated or available in a county level, I'm assuming, maybe, you have it that way.

JERRY DEICHERT: Yeah, I was just going to show you quickly on that...similar to the legislative report, we do have...let's see, a report for the counties.

SENATOR SCHEER: Okay.

JERRY DEICHERT: So, we have lots of tables that have some...just some basic comparison, but then we also have those...I think I showed you quickly some of the graphs, some of the maps so you can see; so that report is there.

SENATOR SCHEER: That's on our...on that link.

JERRY DEICHERT: Our Web site, yeah, yeah. And so...and we do have the legislative districts superimposed on those maps so you can go in and see where your district is, and some of the other counties can see where they fit in the district and everything.

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SENATOR SCHEER: Okay, thank you.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Senator Stinner.

SENATOR STINNER: I do have just an observation. I just think we have to think statewide if we're going to do this.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I do too.

SENATOR STINNER: I mean, I know that everybody has their district and you have some unique things in your district, but I'm more inclined to think about the state in total and what can we do. Can we define out-migration? Can we define housing as an issue for an example? And maybe there's specific data that can...that can support our decision and then branch that into legislation similar to what Matt did with LB518, what we're trying to get done with LB496 as a solution to some of that stuff.

SENATOR SCHEER: I think though as you do it...I think it is a state problem, but I do believe, especially in some of those areas that continue to lose population, they've never seen this.

SENATOR STINNER: You're talking about disseminating the data.

SENATOR SCHEER: Disseminating information, because...

SENATOR STINNER: I'm thinking more in terms of what our initiatives are in the planning stage.

SENATOR SCHEER: Well, and you may find more people with more initiatives if they're aware of the information. If you don't have the information, your thought pattern doesn't go in that direction. I think to start building coalition for the state as a movement, you have to get more people thinking and realizing the problem. There may not be a solution individually for each one of those areas, but for people to be able to discuss it as a whole, I think this information is, as

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Paul said, I mean, it's really just too good of stuff not to be...have out in the hands of those people.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: You know, after listening to a lot of this for a number of years, it's not a very happy message that this information carries for the bulk of those community...500 communities that don't have 5,000 population. The trends are pretty powerful. And that...the information carries a lot of really soul searching as to how...what is the state going to look like assuming the agricultural efficiencies continue to increase. And maybe that's something that we do want to ask, like the major...somebody a presentation a major seed company or genetics company, I guess they call themselves now, the fertilizer company, somebody like John Deere, what's equipment going to look like? Are we going to have farms that are half a county under one operation?

SENATOR STINNER: And totally mechanized.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And totally...and in fact, operated like they fly a drone over Afghanistan with nobody even in the cab. Is that what we're looking at? And if that is...

SENATOR STINNER: Matt will tell you that we have farms now where they've got 30, 40, 50 pivots and they work it off their cell phone and they have moisture probes and things of that nature and they know when a pivot goes down based on what's happening there and they get an alert and send somebody...

SENATOR WILLIAMS: There's no doubt that technology is going to continue going where it is. And it means fewer people in agriculture, fewer people needed to be owners, fewer people to operate the things. We have things going on on Innovation Campus right now, research that will just...would blow your mind when you see what it could...

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Then do we need to take a tour there, have them come here so that our minds get blown? Because if that's the world that the bulk of our state is going to live in in 2030 and 2040, then we got to make some...start adjusting how we're spending money now...what little money we have, to facilitate what we think the thing is going to look like

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optimally. Are the towns of 20,000: Scottsbluff, Columbus, North Platte, what's their probable future? Are they going to stay around 20,000? Are they going to grow a little? Are they going to shrink? What's the probable future for the bulk of the towns that are along the interstate or who aren't near the interstate? What does this mean for our highways? How do we get...we may have a big combine out there with a big bunch of grain in the bin, but how do we get that to market and is our highway system, the way it's laid out now, the most efficient way to get it to market? That's some of the big stuff that we should be trying to shape...

SENATOR WILLIAMS: I think there are some policy decisions over that that we could encourage people at...you mentioned John Deere, I would mention Monsanto as another one we could do. When you get down in the weeds far enough, that stuff is so proprietary and the vision of what these people are doing...I had to swear to secrecy that I got to see it. They're not going to come to a meeting and tell you what they're working on. I mean, this is their multimillion dollar business plan for the future, but it does affect us. Because you used a term a minute ago, you used a term "combine." There would not be that...that piece of machinery would not even exist in what this one concept does.

SENATOR STINNER: Along with that, the consolidation of agriculture, I'm more concerned about the (inaudible) to smaller towns and they start to disappear. And as they start to disappear, it puts a heck of a lot of pressure on their school system, on their hospitals, and nursing homes, and the like of that, that's really what I'm seeing as the pain of this whole thing. Technology is a good thing from one side. It's also people on the other side.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Critical mass is hard to maintain in some of those areas.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: And then we address a touchy issue...really, there are two different economies in Nebraska, at least...

SENATOR STINNER: Oh, yeah.

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SENATOR SCHUMACHER: You have the thing within 60, 70 miles of Omaha, which is a different animal than the thing within 60 or 70 miles of North Platte. And, you know, there is a different...and how do we address that difference adequately between...

SENATOR STINNER: You've got an interstate economy and then your off-the-interstate economy, and that's the way I figure it.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: But even look at the difference on the interstate economy. Gothenburg has a little spunk. You see some development, you drive through Gothenburg, it's clean, there seems to be fairly viable businesses there; but go up the road to Overton, and you don't get the same feeling. And yet they're both about the same distance off the interstate and what's the difference? And, you know, can reasonably...

SENATOR STINNER: Matt lives in Gothenburg, that's...

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: That's why I was looking at him. But reasonably, are we going to see 75 percent of the...those communities be the Overton and 25 percent be the Gothenburg? And if that's the case, how do we identify those apt to succeed and help them succeed and the other ones the trends continue in? Those are, I think, what we should be about. And then how do we address the issues in Omaha? Omaha and Lincoln area have got to compete with a whole lot of other areas that are...across the country wanting the same thing Omaha and Lincoln want. And how do we strategically spend our money the best way--what little money we have--to help them compete and make them competitive? This is really going to be a fun committee if we can...we've got a lot of the data done. Now what do we do with it? And maybe one of the things...little assignments we give ourselves in another meeting or two is to come up with what you think...just a position argument of what you think the state is going to look like and what you think...wild ideas can make it be better or take advantage of the trends and the things that we have in order to surf the wave rather than fight them. This could be a fun committee. Anything else for the good of the cause? Motion to adjourn.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: So moved.

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SENATOR VARGAS: Second.

SENATOR SCHUMACHER: Williams. Favor? Now we're done.