

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Janssen. Before continuing, Senator Bromm announces that we do have a doctor of the day, Senator Clarence...excuse me, Dr. Clarence Davis is here from Osceola. He's not in the Chamber at the moment, but he is here. Thank you. For discussion on the Vrtiska amendment we have Senator Hilgert followed by Warner, Vrtiska, Chambers, Hillman, and Bernard-Stevens. Senator Hilgert.

SENATOR HILGERT: Thank you, Madam President and members. I serve on the committee which heard the testimony from the individuals from Richardson County. And I was impressed on the way that the county officials had outlined the problems and the financial impacts that they have incurred over the last few years, including the floods and the trials and so forth. I was impressed how they outlined their steps that they took, talking about leasing instead of buying emergency vehicles. They went into some minutia as far as some of the attempts that they had to save money. They did go to and borrow money before they took these steps to come to the state of Nebraska, and they made it very clear that they did everything possible and everything that...they considered everything before they did come to the state. They did ask for help, and I believe that...in our best sense of community I think we ought to help out Richardson County. I think in this time with cuts and caps and stretched levies and regarding property taxes and local subdivision funding, I think this is going to be something that we will see in the future more and more. I would like to certainly endorse all the comments from Senator Beutler, I think he's on point. It was certainly, certainly it's appropriate to discuss some of the financial impacts and why some of these things happened to Richardson County, certainly that's an appropriate discussion. But right now Richardson County is in this situation. They did everything they could to mitigate the effects of these disasters, both financial and natural, that have happened to them. They make a extremely convincing case. And I would encourage the body to support this legislation. I will comment very, very briefly as far as the prosecutors and charging the first degree murder, et cetera, asking for the death penalty. I don't think it's good policy to have economic facts follow the line of decision-making when they're pursuing justice. Whether or not the death penalty should be open and an option to our prosecutors, that's certainly a debate that we will continue to have, and that's a very legitimate one. But right now this