

setting up, we are, in this case, allocating 200,000, appropriating \$200,000, at least that's the proposal, that will be overseen by the State Claims Board, and they will be authorized in this case to go ahead and spend up to whatever is in that fund for this local help. And it is not subject to the direct approval of the Legislature, but in due time, if they were denied, or there was a need for more money, there could be a process where they could come to the Legislature for this. Is that generally true of the way this process is going?

SENATOR VRTISKA: Yes, you're correct.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: And I...I'm going to support this, but I think the body does need to be clear that this is another process whereby the state could help local entities, government entities in times of crisis. It's subject to the appropriation by the Legislature, so it is expanding our potential appropriations for additional money. I could foresee, in the case of Nebraska, we may not have hurricanes, but we might have natural disasters in the case of severe drought and perhaps tornadic winds or tornadoes or things like that where counties could have even greater damage than they've had up until this point, as we head into the future, and that this might be an issue in the Legislature seeking more money. So the body needs to recognize that we are setting up this. It is subject to the appropriations that we've done. I do not see...or will do. I do not see it as an entitlement at this point and do not intend for it, from my perspective, to be an entitlement. But it is subject to common sense and good judgment as to whether counties need this as additional help over unforeseen circumstances. And sometimes that's difficult to define. I think it could tend to be somewhat subjective. I think it's worth a try...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: ...for a couple years. I am comfortable that it is only for two years as we head down the road, so that we are not committing ourselves far beyond what we are intending. In other words, it might be in the form of an ultimate insurance policy. I think we all know what we think we want to do, but I do think there's potential for expanding beyond what we intend. So I'm comfortable, the two-year so-called pilot or the restriction on that, and under that basis I am supporting it.