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Appropriations Committee
January 31, 2012

[LB994 LB1019]

The Committee on Appropriations met at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 31, 2012, in Room 1524 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on agency budgets, LB994, and LB1019. Senators present: Lavon Heidemann, Chairperson; John Harms, Vice Chairperson; Tony Fulton; Tom Hansen; Heath Mello; John Nelson; Jeremy Nordquist; and John Wightman. Senators absent: Danielle Conrad.

SENATOR HARMS: We will now open the hearing for LB994. Senator Heidemann. Senator Heidemann, welcome. [LB994]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Thank you. It's a little bit different from this view. [LB994]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah. [LB994]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Be kind to me. Senator Harms and members of the Appropriations Committee, I am Senator Lavon Heidemann, representing District 1 in the southeast corner of the state, home of the Peru State College, and I'm here today to introduce LB994. LB994 creates the State Colleges Sport Facilities Cash Fund which is to be administered by the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges. This fund is to be used for renovation and construction of or improvements to facilities for intercollegiate athletes and student fitness recreation and sports activities. LB994 authorizes the transfer of \$250,000 from the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund to the State College Sports Facilities Cash Fund annually for three years, which is October 1, 2012, 2013, and 2014. Beginning in 2015, the transfer would increase to \$400,000 annually. By that time, the transfer...by the time the transfer is increased to \$400,000, the Lincoln arena will be completed and, thus, more money will be going into the Civic, Community Center financing (sic) Fund. Right now we have about \$1 million, a little bit over, maybe sometimes up to \$1.3 million a year. We expect this to increase when Lincoln comes on board by probably 65 to 75 percent. Also, there might be more...there should be more money coming into this fund when the hotel which is associated with the Qwest Center comes on board. This is going to be a brief opening for me but a very important part when it comes to the State College System and its recreational facilities. I am convinced, and I have talked to people from the college system, if we would have had this in place years back they would not have to be...we would not be hearing from Senator Harms following up with a bill pertaining to the Oak Bowl at Peru State, Armstrong out at Chadron. They would be able to take this money and keep up with the needs that they have. So even though this is a small part, it's a very important part. I think that we should give this very serious consideration. When they set up the convention center fund, as you're probably aware of, 70 percent went to pay back the Qwest Center, 30 percent went out to Lincoln and more rural Nebraska. This fund has been used to build community centers. It's been expanded a little bit in

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recent years. Even if we pull this money out, there is still going to be, I believe, adequate money left to do still those purposes. The money that we take out will help our three colleges, which is in southeast Nebraska, northeast Nebraska, and western Nebraska. I believe it's a very appropriate use of these funds. And if we can accomplish this and accomplish what Senator Harms will introduce to us here pretty soon, I believe that, and this is a very important part for me and I won't be here when this happens, but we will have a remake of LB605. And if we can do this and, Senator Harms, when they can do that, they can dedicate their next LB605 monies, or whatever that bill might be, to educational facilities, which I think they are forced to use that type of money to do this versus for more educational facilities. I'm hoping that we can do Senator Harms's bill, LB1019, and this bill to catch up and for ongoing cost, and when the next remake of LB605 is they can use it for other facilities. With that, I know it was brief. I know hopefully we'll have more conversations in Appropriations when this comes up, but if there's any questions that you might have, I would try to answer them. [LB994]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Heidemann. Do we have any questions? Seeing none, do we have any other proponents of LB994? [LB994]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: I will waive closing. [LB994]

SENATOR HARMS: Okay. Thank you. [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: (Exhibit 5) Senator Harms, members of the committee, my name is Stan Carpenter, S-t-a-n C-a-r-p-e-n-t-e-r, and I'm the chancellor of the Nebraska State College System, and I am here today to speak in very strong support of LB994. And I want to thank Senator Heidemann for bringing this bill forward and for his remarkable foresight in this proposal. I think in its essence this proposal recognizes the tremendous benefit provided to the colleges' service regions as a result of the athletic and recreational facilities located on our campuses. As you know, Chadron, Peru, and Wayne are colleges, as I describe them, colleges of opportunity. And as Senator Heidemann pointed out, we anchor rural Nebraska from the southeast corner to the northwest corner and to the northeast corner of the state. Our institutions are not NCAA Division I institutions, nor do they aspire to that level of competition. Chadron and Wayne are NCAA Division II schools, and Peru is part of the NAIA Athletic System. So for us, when we talk about student athletes, we are talking about students first. Clearly, they are there to get an education. A few of them will go on to make their livelihood in professional sports other than, oh, Danny Woodhead, for example, or Don Beebe of maybe a generation ago. However, athletics plays a very important part in the role of the life of college students at our institutions. It serves a very important role in recruiting students. It serves a very important role in retaining students as well. In addition, intercollegiate athletics plays a very important role to the regions that we serve. It brings together the communities and folks to root for, if you will, their local college teams. And as important to student life are our strong recreational, that is not nonintercollegiate,

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athletic facilities as well. These allow our students the opportunity to participate in intramural athletics, to participate in fitness programs in a way that many of them understand what fitness is about and continue that as a lifelong exercise. We face across the State College System many challenges in providing athletic and recreational facilities for our students. Those programs, whether they're football or basketball or volleyball, are not significant revenue producers for us. These programs, these facilities are often overlooked when it comes to investment because, as Senator Heidemann points out, academic programs clearly are what we have to take care of first. But if we don't take care of these programs we will begin to see students decide to go elsewhere. Some of the examples of things that we could address, some of the facilities that we could address if this program were to be put into place would be our gymnasiums and our recreation centers, our swimming pools, our soccer fields, our football fields, our indoor and outdoor tracks, our softball fields and our baseball fields, our fitness and exercise areas, and our weightrooms, our walking trails, our disk golf courses and the like. You know and these facilities, particularly the recreational facilities but also the athletic facilities, are not just only used by our students and our staff and our faculty. They're utilized by area schools and community groups and organizations, individuals, and a host of other folks around the community and the region as well. I will ask the page if she would pass out...this is kind of an example list of the way that this outreach works to our communities from our institutions, and you'll see on this list that they include things such as games and events and camps and conferences and tournaments and workshops. These kind of events range from, oh, peewee football, I mean peewee wrestling, if you will, at Chadron, to a speaker series at Peru, and at Wayne the National Guard fitness training and relay for life exercises. This bill makes a lot of sense to me. I hope it makes a lot of sense to you as well. As Senator Heidemann pointed out, you will see in our testimony on LB1019 we would probably not have to be here seeking nearly as much money in LB1019 had this program been in place to help us address the deficits that we find in our athletic and our recreational facilities across the system. I want to thank you for taking the opportunity to...for the opportunity to speak with you. I hope you'll give this serious consideration. And I'd be happy to answer any questions. [LB994]

SENATOR HARMS: Well, thank you, Dr. Carpenter. Do we have any questions?
Senator Wightman. [LB994]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you for being here. Thank you, Senator Harms. [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes, Senator. [LB994]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you for being here. I notice that most of the funding probably or I'm guessing most of the funding may come from donations, contributions and that sort of funds rather than the amounts that are going to go in now to the...I think there's \$250,000 for three years and then \$400,000. And then tell us what the other

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sources of revenue coming into this fund would be. [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: Well, as far as I understand it, the bill only contains those two sources of revenue. But obviously we...our colleges are in the fund-raising business. Each college has a foundation. But I must say to you, Senator, that they're fairly modest in their endowments and in their ability to raise funds, because, remember, our institutions started as normal schools. It turned into teacher training schools and still teacher education is the largest part of our academic program. And that's not to say teachers aren't successful, because they are in many ways, but oftentimes they're not very wealthy and so we are in some ways limited in our abilities to go out and raise great amounts of money, but we do. The foundations do a terrific job going out and raising money, especially for specific kinds of purposes and mostly for scholarships. Our foundations are focusing on trying to make sure that our students have enough money to buy their books, to pay their room and board, to pay their tuition and go to school. [LB994]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: So this will be another source, I guess, that you would have from contributions that may come in to these particular funds that are being created here. [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: That's correct, Senator, but this would give us a real strong, solid, continual source of revenue to address the shortfalls that we have across the system, because we don't have a lot of money to put into these programs. They're not revenue producers, as I said, but they're critically important to our institutions, to the educational opportunities for our students, and critically important in attracting and retaining students, quite frankly, in today's world. [LB994]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: So if you were replacing today, and I'm sure it would vary for each of the colleges, but how much would it cost to build a new recreation facility or a new gymnasium, say, at any of the three state teachers'...we're talking in the millions, obviously. [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: We are doing that, Senator, there's no question. If we were to build a brand new gymnasium, say, at Wayne, it would be in the millions of dollars. But right now the priority items in these arenas are Armstrong out at Chadron and the Oak Bowl at Peru. We just finished the AWAC Center at Chadron (sic), the Al Wheeler Activity Center. So in the large areas we're kind of getting caught up, if we can get these two projects taken care of. So if we can get these off the board and then we can annually look at those areas that need the most attention, we can do that. Or if we found that we are caught up, we could perhaps, and I don't know if this is...I haven't talked to the presidents about this or the board so...we could perhaps bank a couple years of this money and then do a serious renovation at one of our institutions as necessary. [LB994]

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SENATOR WIGHTMAN: And there's not a sunset and I'm not suggesting that there should be a sunset, because it seems to me it ought to be a continuing fund, but there's no planned sunset on this. It would continue to receive these monies from the State Treasurer every year. Is that correct? [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: That's correct, Senator. [LB994]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you. [LB994]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Wightman. Senator Nelson. [LB994]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you, Senator Harms. Thank you, Dr. Carpenter. How, as this fund builds up then, how will the expenditures be made? Who determines what money goes where for either renovation... [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: Sure. [LB994]

SENATOR NELSON: ...or construction? [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: That's a good question and I can address this. I will address it also in our testimony on LB1019. But the Board of Trustees every biennium takes all the requests in from the colleges for capital construction or capital renovation, comes through my office and we put that list together. We work with the college presidents to help try to figure out what's the most important piece and then we go to the board and say, okay, board, here are the capital requests that have come forward, we need you to prioritize them; here's our suggestions. However, it's the board who makes the ultimate decision about the priorities of the system on the capital construction basis. That's what's happened since I've been here; it's happened before I've been here. And you'll hear in testimony on LB1019 that Armstrong has been on the board's priority list since about 2003 and the Oak Bowl issue has been on the drawing board since about 2002. They've moved their way up through the capital prioritization process. So it's the board who will ultimately make that decision. [LB994]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you. [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes, sir. [LB994]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Nelson. Senator Hansen. [LB994]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you, Senator Harms. Stan, it's good to see you here today. [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: Thank you. [LB994]

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SENATOR HANSEN: I had a very...and this is for the benefit of the rest of the Appropriations Committee, I had a very interesting trip to Chadron last summer and did see some of these things at first sight, and I'd like to go to Peru and to Wayne both, not on the same day but... [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: Well, we would be happy to have you, Senator. [LB994]

SENATOR HANSEN: But it's interesting, you've almost got to be there to see the problem, some of the structural problems of what we'll address in LB1019, but still this seems to be a logical...not a huge amount of money to start some of these projects, so... [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: Well, thank you, Senator. I think it is. And again, I want to thank Senator Heidemann for his foresight in this. It's a unique way for us to deal with issues that are critically important to us and do it in a way so that we don't wind up in a position where we have so much deferred maintenance that we have to come in and seek significant amounts of money. So I would agree with you. Thank you. [LB994]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. [LB994]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Dr. Hansen...Senator Hansen. Do we have any other...do we have any other questions? Dr. Carpenter, thank you very much. [LB994]

STAN CARPENTER: Thank you, Senator Harms. I appreciate it. [LB994]

SENATOR HARMS: Do we have any other proponents for LB994? Seeing none, do we have any people who would like to testify as opponents for LB994? Seeing none, do we have anyone who would like to testify in a neutral capacity for LB994? Seeing none, we will close the hearing for LB994. [LB994]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: We will now open the public hearing on LB1019. Senator Harms. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: (Exhibit 6) Thank you, Senator Heidemann and colleagues. My name is John N. Harms, H-a-r-m-s. I'm here to introduce LB1019. First, Senator Heidemann, thank you for giving me the opportunity to visit with my colleagues about LB1019. I have some very strong views about this bill. It covers two projects, which you've heard mentioned by Dr. Carpenter. It's the Armstrong Gymnasium at Chadron State College, and it's the Oak Bowl at Peru State College. What I'm going to do today is give you some overviews. I've had the opportunity to go to both locations. I've seen Chadron, I've seen Armstrong, I've seen the Oak Bowl, so I have a pretty good understanding about the conditions of them. So today I'm going to give you just a brief

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overview. Then there will be other people who will come before you to give you maybe a little more detail in regard to the project and maybe be able to answer some of the more specific questions for you. First, I'd like to start with the Armstrong Building that's in Chadron State College. This building was actually built in 1964 for a total amount of about approximately \$600,000 and, quite frankly, there has been very little added money towards maintenance or anything else of that facility since the time that they built it. And Senator Hansen mentioned to you that both Senator Hansen and I had the fortunate opportunity on October 10 to see the Armstrong facility. And while I was there, I was alarmed and had some extreme concerns about the conditions of the facilities and its ability to serve students. It's just not good in this modern age. I noted that there are programmatic as well as there are physical deficiencies that are critical to this facility. In fact, colleagues, I would have to tell you that there are probably better high school facilities than you'd find at Chadron State College or even at the Oak Bowl. There's better public school facilities. And I can tell you at Western Nebraska Community College just south of Chadron State College, their facilities puts this building to shame. The building was designed also before women athletics became a very strong point in higher education and the flow back and forth is just not what it needs to be. And to be honest with you, I believe that Chadron State College is a risk to a certain degree, unless we start to correct some of the deficiencies and particularly in dealing with women athletics. This facility has served the college well for 50 years and it's well overdue a major remodeling and renovation because it's needed so badly. When I was there, I noticed that there was potentially some really serious liability concerns. I don't know, maybe it's just my education and training experience that I have, in the past, my past world, I always look for those kinds of issues. And I can tell you that the area that has me with the greatest concern in the facility at Chadron, the Armstrong facility, is the weightroom. It's undersized, it's cramped, it's overcrowded. And every athlete that goes in there, quite frankly, is at risk and I don't think we can continue to tolerate this. The gymnasium is the biggest facility portion, main gymnasium is the biggest space that they have for any kind of large opportunities for crowds of people, whatever it might be. They have their commencement activities there and I've had the fortunate opportunity to participate in that. I'm really very surprised, to be honest with you, that they've gotten by with the Fire Marshal. You see some pictures in there. It's absolutely jam-packed and it's just not appropriate. Not only that, the people who are on the stage, the people who are going to participate, put on their robes and things in the locker room which opens your eyes just to go in there. It's a true experience. It just isn't appropriate. You know, in my previous world as a college president, I can tell you that one thing I learned very quickly, if you're going to attract students to your institution, you have to have appropriate facilities. Kids today really look at that very strongly and if they come from a school that has better science labs, better biology labs, better technology labs or better athletic facilities than what they see at the college, they're not coming. They're just not going to come. Some may change their mind a little bit if you give them a scholarship, but you have to entice them. And the way the campuses look when you drive on is a major factor in parents and students in deciding, you know, this is a place that cares,

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this is a place that's well-maintained. This will carry over to their thoughts about the kind of instruction they're going to get when you look at the facilities and you look at the grounds itself. Chadron State College and their foundation have made some pretty strong commitments here. The college has already spent \$44,000 for their planning, plus they've put away \$775,000 for the project, and for a small institution that's a lot of money. Their foundation is committed to \$1.2 million towards this project, which I think is important, and both the college and the foundation are committed to this. So this project is really needed, it's well overdue, and it's time to bring it up to what I call the modern world where you can put technology in there. I don't know if those...if the book would show you some of the wires and things that are hanging out. But today when student athletes come to an institution, they want to be able to go to a gymnasium or to an athletic center or to a field house, whatever terminology you care to use, and they want to see modern technology. They want to be able to see technology. They want to be able to see the computers. They want to have space where they can have this broken down and they can have time with their coaches. This just simply does not happen. It's very difficult at Chadron and we need to have state-of-the-art facilities so we could begin to track the students of the future. When I went to Peru State College and I visited the Oak Bowl, I would have to tell you, colleagues, that I was pretty much shocked. In all my life I've been in education, higher education, done lots of consultant work over the years helping colleges with troubled institutions, but I was truly shocked when I saw the Oak Bowl. It was constructed in 1900. I don't think I should probably have to go any further than that. You can imagine that it was...it was constructed in 1900 what it might look like. Well, it's worse than what you probably think. They have concrete bleachers and those bleachers are this tall, I mean, excuse me, the steps down are this tall. I was so fortunate my wife decided to stay with the president's wife because I can tell you she could not have maneuvered those steps, down that stadium steps and those bleachers. There's just no way. The seats in there they got from someplace else that they were throwing them away, giving them away or whatever they did. They put them in. So they've added a few things over the years but not very much, and I saw similar things with the Oak Bowl I saw with the Chadron State College project. They're both programmatic, they're both physical deficiencies, very little if any improvement occurred, I hate to say this, probably since 1900, probably the bleachers, that's about it. I would tell you that of all the places that I have visited, this has some of the greatest safety and liability concerns of anyplace I've been. The people that go to see those games are at risk because they can't maneuver those steps. I don't know what they do with people that are a little older, such as myself. It is almost impossible to maneuver those steps to get to the seats. There are no handrails. As I said, the concrete steps are very difficult to navigate. There's limited public parking. There's no handicapped accessible parking at all, which tells me right then that this is a problem. Rest rooms for ADA compliance just don't exist. I don't have to tell you that caught my attention because I would guess that there's probably maybe 1,500, 2,000 people who attend those games, maybe a little more, I don't know. But when I looked at the women's facilities, they had three stool toilets, and in talking with the staff there, after

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people leave that portion of the building they have to go in with a plunger to plunge it so they can get it to drain. Doesn't say much about what we're doing here and I just have, as I said, have difficulties with this because it's just not appropriate. And when you look at the facility, the bowl itself, where the football plays...where they play their games is absolutely beautiful. I mean it's absolutely just kind of breathtaking. It's quiet. It's got a great touch there. But the tragedy of that is they've got a drainage ditch that I think runs to the north and when I took a good look at that from a distance, anybody who's coaching there from another team would have to be concerned about the liability question. Because when an athlete focuses on a ball that's being thrown to him, if it's overthrown he could very well end up in that drainage ditch and have a serious injury, and that runs right along the guest sidelines. And in the front of the concession stand that I looked at, there's a little paving that's kind of a drainage place where water will run down because it's kind of built in the setting of the hill. If you have just a little bit damp weather, you're going to be standing in water. And I can tell you that the concession stand is really not a concession stand. It's that poor. And they have no visiting locker rooms so when you come to play there, there are no locker rooms for the visitors. So what this funding does and what this project is, is to correct the deficiencies that are there, quite honestly, in a state entity, such as this great state, should never, ever exist, period. They'll cover the drainage ditch and that will allow them to maybe expand into women's soccer and grass that in. They'll cover the top of that. They'll also address the drainage issues that they have, which are really severe. They'll replace or they'll replace some of the structures for some of the facilities, including the press box, including an entry plaza, concourse, rest rooms, and make it ADA...meet the ADA standards. And they'll remodel the existing field house. I want to talk about that just a minute. When you talk about and think in your own mind about a field house, what do you think about? Usually a large facility, you've got a lot of space, lots of opportunities. Lots of times the field house has basketball courts on it, the whole series. This is just a small building, and I would say in some homes probably their family room and their living room would be bigger than this, okay? They put a hundred and some athletes or more athletes, football players in there; they're standing on top of each other. There's no way the coaches can get these kids together to have a decent conversation when they're not standing on top of each other. And so what I'm saying to you is that I think it's time to fix this. I think, to be honest with you, both of these facilities are embarrassing for this great state. And so in closing, as I said earlier, there will be some other individuals that will come before you that have a heck of a lot more knowledge than I have, especially just for the two trips, one in Chadron and I guess one in Peru. But I do have concerns and I would be hopes that...I think Senator Hansen brought out a very good point. You have to see this to understand it. And I know that Senator Heidemann or I would be very happy, or both of us would be very happy to make arrangements for you just go down and look at that. It's a little more difficult to get to Chadron. You'd have to take our word for it. But if you're out there, Senator Hansen has had the opportunity to see it. He understands it. I've seen this. But Peru is close enough, in an hour and a half we can be there and you can see it for yourself and understand where I'm coming from and what I

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observed, what I saw. So, Senator Heidemann, thank you, and I complete my testimony. Be happy to answer any questions or we can just allow those to be with the people that are coming up. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Thank you for letting us hear about LB1019. Are there any questions? Senator Wightman. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you, Senator Heidemann. Senator Harms, would you suggest that for someone of my limited mobility that it would not be a good place to attend a football on Saturday afternoon? [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: No. No, it would...no, it would not be. You and my wife both, that's not the place for you to go. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Now they will let you sit up I think clear to the top, but you're not going to be in where you're going to want to be, John. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: No aerial service to get me up towards... [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: No, I don't think so. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Are there any other questions? Senator Hansen. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: One question maybe for you more than...but, Senator Harms has been to Peru. Where is Rulo from Peru? [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah, I don't know that for sure. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: But you've been to Harrison. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: You know how far it is from Rulo to Harrison? [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: No, I don't. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Trivia question: 577 miles. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you. I've always wanted to know that. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thanks. Thanks. (Laughter) [LB1019]

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SENATOR HARMS: You're very gracious and kind. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Well, it's a big state. That's...I guess that's the point. It is a big state. I mean we have a college in the southeast corner, we have a college toward the northwest corner... [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: True. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...and it serves a huge state. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: It does. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: And students, we can't get students from the west to come to, you know, our larger universities. And we need to... [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: I agree. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...we have a state college; we need to take care of it. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: See, I agree with that. You know, both Chadron State College and Peru have beautiful...it's a beautiful campus, beautiful facilities, and it's time to make that final investment to get it to where it needs to be. So, Mr. Chairman, I would waiver my closing. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: You talked a lot about the Oak Bowl and the challenges, the need, and I was with you when we was in Peru and you went through the rest of the facilities, the rest of the colleges...the rest of the college. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah. Yes. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: We might not be proud of the Oak Bowl in southeast Nebraska, but we're very, very proud of Peru State. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah, let me... [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: And I would like you to touch base just briefly on the rest of the... [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah. Hey, thank you very much for doing that because I didn't want you to look at this as all gloom and doom and very poor. I was really excited and I told Senator Heidemann when I came back it's kind of like when he goes home and gets around the fields and gets around the cattle and all those sort of things that's part of his

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life that I'm sure he feels very comfortable and gets rejuvenated. I'm going to have to tell you, I got rejuvenated when I went there. It was so much fun for me to be there. The facilities are absolutely beautiful. They have done some marvelous things, I mean in every category. The only place that I've seen that really needs to be fixed badly is what we just described. The rest of it is an absolutely beautiful little campus. I would not object for my children going there or my grandchildren going there. It's just you have to go see it. For a small campus, it had been 40 years since I've been there and I have to tell you it changed tremendously. I had something locked up in my mind that was different, and when I walked in there I really got excited and I was excited about what their plans are and the innovation that they have done with some of their facilities and their science labs and all the things we saw. Their library is just phenomenal. I mean it's just an absolute beautiful school and I would encourage anyone to go to that school.
[LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: And I want to touch briefly, and this is a little bit of a comment and then you can follow up or whatever, I know your former life and what you was involved with, with the Community College System, and I've become very, as a state senator, I've become very aware of the college system that we have, which is Chadron State, Wayne State, and Peru State. And also I think everybody on this committee has become very well aware of the university system. I believe that they all serve distinctive but different roles in educating our children. And when it comes to the college system, for four-year degrees or a master's, I think that they fill a different role for kids that maybe come from a different part of the state, the more rural part, or even kids that come from Lincoln and Omaha that don't quite fit in at a larger setting. I've been aware of situations where, and not belittling the university system whatsoever because I am a supporter, but got a Regents Scholarship to the University of Nebraska. Within two weeks they were at a college system setting because they couldn't fit in. Your comment as far as the college system and the community college and university system?
[LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Absolutely. Yeah, I think they definitely have a role in this great state and I'm a great example of that, Senator. I graduated from a rural high school. There were 30-some in my graduating class. I went to Chadron State College. I was frightened. I mean I didn't know whether I fit. I came from a small rural school, not the greatest student at that time because I liked athletics, I liked to go fishing and hunting. I was perfectly happy. So I went to Chadron State College not knowing for sure whether I really fit there, and I remember their class was one of the biggest classes they ever had. I think it was like 300 students. Now they're almost 3,000 students. But if it would not have been for people like Ross Armstrong, who was a gentleman who was...they called him at that time dean of men and also the athletic director, getting a hold of me and kind of showing me the way. But he cared for me and he saw something in me that I didn't see in myself and I found myself at Chadron State College. I was exposed to art and I was exposed to all kinds of other things that I never was exposed to in a small school,

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and it turned me on. I got excited about learning. Learning was then fun for me. Up to that point it never had been. And if it wouldn't have been for Ross Armstrong and people of that college, when I was a sophomore I was thinking about just quitting. I saw all of my friends, you know, have automobiles and that stuff. I could just hardly afford to go to school. And those people reached out and said to me, you're worth saving. That's what it's about. That's the thing that you find in these state colleges and these smaller schools. There's a role for them and there was a role for me or I wouldn't be here today. So there is a role for them and I'm proud of what they do. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Thank you. Senator Nelson. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you, Senator Heidemann. Thank you, Senator Harms. This is a very good pictorial display here, very helpful. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Well, I had nothing to do with it, Senator Nelson, so okay? [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: All right. Do you have that in front of you though? [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: Do you have this in front of you? [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yes...no, I don't. Yes, I do. I lied to you. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. This...I don't know whether you're directionally disadvantaged or not but this vision for the Armstrong Gymnasium, that's the last page there... [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Uh-huh. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: ...on Chadron,... [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Sure. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: ...I'm trying to figure out which is the existing structure. And maybe someone later I can ask, just for my own information. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Well, if you look right at the front, where it says Chadron State College, as you open it up, that's the facility as you see it today, the Armstrong educational facility like this. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: Yes, but I can't tell from that when I see this. And I'll just ask Mr.

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Carpenter. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah. Well, I want to make sure I don't say the wrong thing but... [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. This last, all right, last page, you find where it... [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah, I see where you...I see where that's the vision of it. I think that's the future expansion of it. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: Yeah. Right, and... [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah, they're looking at expanding that in the future. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: Yeah, it appears to me that the blue portion must be the existing structure? Is... [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: You know, Senator Nelson, I wish I could tell you but I'm color-blind... [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: All right. Okay. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: ...so you really, you need to get somebody else up here. I'll give you the wrong answer, there's no question about it. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: All right. Thank you, Senator Harms. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: My wife will tell you that too. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Senator Heidemann, thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: I think that was the last question. There's just nothing you can say to that, is there? (Laughter) [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: No. [LB1019]

SENATOR HARMS: Okay. Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Thank you, Senator Harms. Is anybody else wishing to testify on LB1019 as a proponent? That would be you. [LB1019]

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STAN CARPENTER: That would be me, Senator. Thank you, Senator. Members of the committee, I'm still Stan Carpenter and I'm still the chancellor of the State College System, as far as I know, and I appreciate the opportunity to come and chat with you. Senator, let me just answer your question right away. It's the barrel roof portion of that picture that is the current Armstrong Building, if I can find it here. You see the roof with the curved top? [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: All right. I see several curves on this picture here. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes, and if you look at the curved roof there, that's the original Armstrong Building, and then you can see we're using that as...and all that, plus additions, additional construction around that. [LB1019]

SENATOR NELSON: All right. All right. Thank you very much. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes, sir. I want to thank Senator Harms and Senator Heidemann for bringing this bill. As you already know, there are two projects in this bill that are critically important to the Nebraska State College System: the Armstrong facility, which we were just chatting about, and the Oak Bowl, which Senator Harms was just chatting about. As I said before, both of these projects had been on the Board of Trustees' priority list since the early 2000s and we are hopeful that we can get them off the list and be able to address some other projects in the near future as well. But there are several common concerns and attributes that both of these projects have. They both served the colleges well for many, many decades, but they are now stretched beyond, if you will, the capabilities to serve today's students and the surrounding communities and the colleges' service regions. We really reached a point, and I think you can see from the pictures from both on the easels and in the book, where most high school facilities in the state and the region have better facilities than we do at these colleges. Both are really substandard in their code compliance and they don't meet ADA requirements as well. Neither is...neither of these projects are comparable, if you will, to the facilities that the institutions face when they go into their athletic conference. All the facilities in the athletic conferences in which these institutions belong are in better shape than these facilities are today. Obviously, these facilities, as you well know already, have fallen victim to some difficult economic times. We've not been able to put capital construction money into these facilities, even though it's absolutely necessary to bring them up to current standards. As we talked earlier in our testimony, both of these facilities, had we had the foresight that Senator Heidemann brought forth in LB994 years ago, we probably wouldn't be here talking about this kind of money or these kind of capital construction or renovation projects. These two projects are really desperately needed now, desperately needed now to begin to address the backlog of our deferred needs that exist in the athletic and recreational facilities across the Nebraska State College System. As I mentioned in my prior testimony, the Board of Trustees reviews our systemic needs for every biennial budget presentation to the Legislature. It also reviews

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and approves the program statements for each of these projects. So the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State College System is intimately aware of and has a great deal of knowledge of the programs' issues here and the construction that we need to carry on. And on December 14 of this past year, the board had a special meeting with the singular purpose of looking at both of these projects, and I can tell you that the board supports this bill wholeheartedly and supports these two projects completely, and the board will be very pleased if we can find a way to complete these projects. I would also say, Senator Heidemann, and to the rest of the committee, we would be happy to host you at Peru. We would be happy to bring our Peru State College Wildcat (sic) bus up and bus you down and bring you back at your convenience. And I'm sure that President Hanson would be happy to host you at his home with his wife Elaine. Yes, okay. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Bobcats. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Bobcats. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: You said Wildcats. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Wildcats. Did I say Wildcats? (Laughter) That's because I've got Curt Frye from Wayne and I got a little...Bobcats, thank you. Yes, I knew that because I knew there's a Bobcat statue right out the administration building that I walked past all the time when I was president there. Anyway, I won't take any more of your time, but I did ask President Janie Park from Chadron to come in today and I asked President Hanson to come in today. And Curt Frye, president at Wayne, asked if he could come in today to show support for these two projects, even though they are not germane to his institution. We also asked two students to come in and chat with you for a little bit today. We've asked Ashley Riesen from Chadron, who is a track athlete and who also grew up in Chadron and is very familiar with the Armstrong Building; and we asked Will Jackson, who is one of our student trustees from Peru State College and a football player at Peru, to come and chat with you about these today, these projects today, and between the presidents and these students you will get all the details you need. But I have made them promise that they won't give testimony more than four or five minutes because I know you had a long day yesterday, you've had a long day today. But I do want you to understand what the needs are from those who are impacted on a day-to-day basis for these facilities. And with that, I'd be happy to answer any questions that you might have of me. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Senator Wightman. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you, Chairman Heidemann. Thank you again, Stan, for being here. [LB1019]

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STAN CARPENTER: Yes, sir. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: I thought...I know that Senator Nelson and I serve on the Executive Committee and you appear frequently before us... [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes, sir. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: ...with regard to student housing bonds. And as you might describe, obviously the big difference between that is that those provide rental income, those facilities, and you can pay for them out of bonds. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes, Senator. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: It's a little difficult to pay for these kinds of facilities out of bonding. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: That's right, it would be difficult to do that unless the state would stand behind those bonds, like it did with LB605, and we could contribute some portion of that. But the revenue bonds obviously for our revenue bond projects, residence halls and so on, so forth, generate the revenue that we can then pledge to pay off the bonds to get that renovation and construction done. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Probably would not be possible with these facilities at all. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: And excuse me, Chairman Heidemann. I forgot to mention you also serve on that Executive Committee. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: I actually do, nonvoting but I'm there. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: We try. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Yes. Senator Fulton. [LB1019]

SENATOR FULTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of course I have a predilection for Peru State also, being near my hometown. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes. [LB1019]

SENATOR FULTON: The drawing on the last page here put together by DLR Group causes me to ask how much work has been done toward... [LB1019]

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STAN CARPENTER: We have a planning document in place and we have updated that in the last couple of years, and I know that President Hanson has been working on getting that updated so we have a current planning document that's ready to go. We will have to take the Peru project to the Coordinating Commission for its approval because it hasn't been through that process yet; Armstrong has been. But I'm confident that if the Legislature would be so good to us as to fund this project, then I'm sure the Coordinating Commission would find it in the goodness of their hearts to say it's a good idea. [LB1019]

SENATOR FULTON: Okay. Thank you. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes, sir. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Senator Hansen. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. Mr. Carpenter, you have at Chadron, Janie Park is a recent graduate of Chadron; you're going to play in the Super Bowl on Sunday... [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: That is correct. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...and congratulations on that too. His folks are going...both going to be there so looking forward to that. What is wrong with the geology of the soil up there that this building has cracked that much in only 50 years? [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Well, from 1964 to now I don't know that I can answer that question. I can tell you, Senator, though that we have had a study done as recently as this week on...if I can ask Ed Hoffman which wall... [LB1019]

ED HOFFMAN: South wall. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: ...the south wall of Armstrong and it is still in good shape. It will withstand the construction and the renovation project. But in terms of the settling, I guess just after 50 or 60 years or 50 years of being there, that happens naturally. Obviously, there was another building up there that had a much more serious problem that we took care of several years ago. But it's just an old building and it just needs to be revitalized and I think we can do it. I'm confident in the program statement and the project statement that has been put together by the architects and I think it will withstand another 50 years, hopefully. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Since I was up there on October 10, the next probably situation that reminded me of your weightroom was yesterday when there's about 100 seats in

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here and there were 100 people in here, and your weightroom is about half the size of this room and there were 100 sweaty young men... [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes, Senator. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...working out in there and I couldn't believe how small that situation was. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: That's that picture right there on the bottom. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Yeah. Yeah. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yeah, it's... [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: And that was...we stuck our heads in; that's as far as I'd go. I mean it was...it looked almost dangerous in there... [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: It was certainly dangerous for me. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...with all the flying metal and it was...I know they...I'm sure they have to rotate, at least by sport,... [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: They do. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...they have to rotate in and out of there. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: They do. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: It's not a good facility. For the program evidently, obviously it is, their football program and their other programs and we'll hear about the track program here in a minute, so... [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yeah, and I think you'll hear Ashley testify about how they finally gave up on going in there. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Yeah. Yesterday reminded me of your weightroom. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yeah, that was...yeah. Not that I'm a weight lifter, but if I was I wouldn't go in that room either. I guess it's pretty obvious I'm not a weight lifter. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. [LB1019]

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SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Senator Fulton. [LB1019]

SENATOR FULTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps to lighten our day a little bit, I'm noticing on the picture of the Oak Bowl,... [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Yes, sir. [LB1019]

SENATOR FULTON: ...which incidentally does a great job of capturing what a beautiful place it is,... [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: It is a gorgeous place. [LB1019]

SENATOR FULTON: ...I'm going to make a request that scoreboard, there's a way to maybe block that out... [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Oh. (Laugh) [LB1019]

SENATOR FULTON: ...because the Cats are faring so well. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Okay. We'll take care of that, won't we, Dan? Yeah, I see that. [LB1019]

SENATOR FULTON: Okay. All right. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Any other questions? [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Thank you, Senator Heidemann. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Thank you. [LB1019]

STAN CARPENTER: Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Welcome. [LB1019]

JANIE PARK: Good afternoon, Senator Heidemann and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Janie Park, spelled J-a-n-i-e P-a-r-k. I'm the president of Chadron State College and I'm also here today in support of LB1019. I want to thank you for considering this Chadron State project and for all that you do in support of the Nebraska State College System. Your support for education in general, and specifically the State College System during the recent tough economic times is truly remarkable and we're all very appreciative. There are many good things happening at Chadron State College that the state of Nebraska can be proud of. For instance, in September the U.S. News and World Report named Chadron State the 6th best public institution in

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its 12-state list of Midwest regional colleges, and G.I. Jobs magazine ranked Chadron in the top 15 percent of all colleges and universities nationwide in serving the U.S. military and veterans. Our student athletes are also remarkable. The men's track and field team was named the 2011 Division II indoor Men's Scholar Team of the Year, Scholar Team of the Year, and for the second consecutive year the women's basketball team had the second highest grade point average in Division II. In fact, their collective grade point average ranked fourth highest in all of the divisions: I, II, III, NAIA, and junior college. And of course I have to brag about Danny Woodhead, Chadron State's own Danny Woodhead who will play for the Patriots in the Super Bowl on February 5th. Danny is Chadron State's second in recent history to play in the Super Bowl. He was preceded by Don Beebe, who played in a record six Super Bowls and is currently cochairing Chadron State's search for a new football coach. Now let me tell you about the Armstrong facility that's being addressed in LB1019. Armstrong is a 36,000-square-foot, 50-year-old building which has had no major renovation ever, since its original construction. The building houses our only gymnasium and hosts not only athletic contests and practice but all large high school and college-related activities, including commencement. The 50-year-old building is deficient in many ways. For instance, it's not air-conditioned and the heating and ventilation system is 50 years old. It's unreliable and inefficient and, in short, it's uncomfortable in all seasons. I'm embarrassed to admit that visiting teams regularly complain to the conference commissioner about the substandard condition of the facility and, as you might imagine, it compromises student recruiting and retention. Fifty years ago, when the building was built, the architects could not anticipate twenty-first century needs for the facility, in particular, the emergence of women's athletics and a student body five times or maybe six times the size it was in 1960. Women's volleyball, basketball, softball, and track and field compete with football and all the other men's sports for locker rooms, practice times, training and conditioning, and athletic contests, not to mention scheduling of concerts, speakers, and commencement. The gymnasium is too small to accommodate current athletic events and other large gatherings. In fact, we've had to resort to using a video link to the student center across the street from the arena for crowd overflow, which has been very disappointing for visitors, especially during commencement. Support spaces, such as locker rooms, rest rooms, the training room, and the strength and conditioning room, don't have the space requirements needed for multiple sports programs, including women's sports and are, as was said earlier, overcrowded, unsafe, and they don't meet ADA guidelines. The office space for support personnel, coaches and graduate assistants doesn't comply with NCAA standards. For instance, two small work stations must be shared by eight graduate assistants and small one-person office spaces are shared by two to three coaches or staff members. Senator Heidemann and members of the Appropriations Committee, we are prepared to move forward with this critical project if the funding in LB1019 is approved. In 2005 a professional design team was selected for the first stage of the planning process for the project and a draft program statement was completed and approved by the Board of Trustees in 2006 and subsequently by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. The college has set aside

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\$800,000 for the project and the Chadron State College Foundation has raised an additional \$1.2 million for the facility. If LB1019 is approved, we will be able to complete the project. I thank you again for your longstanding support for Chadron State College and the Nebraska State College System, and your consideration of this bill. And I invite you all to visit Chadron State College. It's actually very close by western standards. It's only 447 miles, door to door, from the Capitol Building here, and I would like to have all of you visit our campus. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have before I turn this presentation over to President Dan Hanson for his remarks on the Oak Bowl. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you. [LB1019]

JANIE PARK: Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Welcome. [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: Thank you, Senator Heidemann, members of the Appropriations Committee. I'm Dan Hanson, that's spelled D-a-n H-a-n-s-o-n, and I'm here in support of LB1019. I want to thank you for taking the time to consider this Oak Bowl project, a special thank you to Senator Harms for introducing this bill and for your clear overview earlier today, and I also want to thank you for your work over the last few years to assure stable support for the Nebraska State College System and higher ed in general. It makes a big difference for our students and we have an opportunity to see that on a day-to-day basis. I want to talk a little bit about Peru State. Over the past 12 years, there's been a significant investment in Nebraska's first college, Peru State. If you were to come to campus, and I hope you do, you'd find a beautiful historic campus, renovated to meet the current needs of our students. You'd find enrollment growth of over 55 percent over the recent years with a recent resurgence in our on-campus growth. You'd find enhanced quality in our academic programs. At our recent reaccreditation visit, the visiting team's preliminary report recommends the strongest possible accreditation based on their visit, assuring you that we're offering the types of educational programs you should expect at a state college. We also have a visionary strategic plan in place, focused on community engagement, an enhanced role in the region and an enhanced role in the state. But as we look to the future, there's a major facility issue that remains and you know what that is. That's the Oak Bowl. The Oak Bowl, built in 1900, is perhaps one of the most beautiful small college settings for a football game that you'll find but it's desperately in need of renovation. It is one of the most out-of-date and dangerous state-owned facilities in Nebraska. Let me provide some specifics, and some of these you've already heard, but there's significant deterioration throughout the entire complex, creating safety and liability issues through the whole facility. There's very old drainage under the field which occasionally collapses, creating potholes in the playing surface. There's an open cement drainage ditch that runs the entire length of the visitor's sideline and creates safety issues for our players. And there's simply no handicap access. It's

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difficult to maneuver even if you have full mobility. There's steep inclines and hazardous drop-offs on both sides of the stadium. The steps leading down to the stadium and the steps inside the stadium, as Senator Harms has mentioned, are big and they're uneven and they're not to code, most don't have the benefit of handrails. Complex is undersized. The current seating capacity is 890 and we've drawn crowds up to 2,300. The 1950s-era rest rooms, concession stand, and press box are out-of-date and, again, undersized. Senator Harms gave the example of the women's rest room. We have three stalls there with antiquated plumbing. We should have 15, according to the code for the size of crowds that we host. And he mentioned this but I've talked to a couple students who have done this, we staff an employee, often a student worker, armed with a plunger to handle the inevitable emergencies on game day. I don't know if that's the best resume builder but it's a good character builder. (Laughter) The field house, built in 1966, is just not large enough for 120 players. Storage of football equipment overflows into the rest rooms and into the laundry area. There's no meeting space large enough for all of our players to meet at once. There's no good place for even a film presentation. There's no space for visiting teams to dress near the field. That may be an advantage to us. They have to walk a long ways down a hill and then back up to get there. But as new members of the Heart of America Athletic Conference, we now host teams from Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas, and for many of these visitors their only interaction with the state of Nebraska or the Nebraska State College System leaves a very negative impression. This has been a longstanding need. The initial program statement was approved in 2002. The architectural group, the DLR Group, updated that statement this past year and it was approved by our Board of Trustees this past March. Total project cost is over \$14 million. An up-to-date, modern facility would enhance the image of the college, improving our retention and recruitment efforts. It would communicate a commitment to excellence to our students and the public, and that's important for us. It would enhance our large teacher education program, giving more teaching spaces for our physical education methods classes. It would allow us to be a regional host for things such as high school playoffs and band competitions. Maybe most importantly it would provide a safe, pleasant environment for our students and for their guests. So I ask that you invest in the safety of our students, that you invest in the future of the college, future of the region, and the future of the state. Thank you again for your support and your consideration of this bill. I would be glad to host you for a tour of the Oak Bowl. I will just make a commitment that my wife would also be glad to have you in our home for a cup of coffee if you can make it there. And I would welcome any questions you might have before I turn this over to the president of Wayne State, Curt Frye. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Senator Wightman. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you, Senator Heidemann, Chairman Heidemann. And thank you, Dr. Hanson, for being here. I'm assuming that this hampers you in your recruitment, probably both students and athletes. Would that be correct? [LB1019]

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DAN HANSON: That's true. And this facility communicates not just to our student athletes but it communicates a substandard message to anybody who comes to campus. And so it certainly hurts our athletic recruitment. I think it hurts the state college system in general by having such a poor facility. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Certainly doesn't help the image any of the college. [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: No. No, it does not. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: I'm a graduate of what used to be one of the state colleges, that was Kearney, about over a half-century ago now when I graduated. I hate to admit that but...and not only I graduated but later my college graduated into the university system I guess. But at any rate, I certainly appreciate the role that the state colleges have played in the development of Nebraska, I would say. [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: Well, and I'm fairly new to the State College System but I've just been impressed by, I have my experience with Peru State, but how important that college is to southeast Nebraska, both symbolically and economically but also from an educational standpoint. And so it's a great place. This is the next step for us. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: I might add one statement. I don't mean to portray that students and athletes are necessarily mutually exclusive. I think we're going to see examples here of people that are both, so... [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: And we have a unique situation this year. Our football team was named a NAIA Scholar Team, which means they averaged over three points for 110 players. That's quite unusual and I think it's the first time in our history, but we'll keep working on that. But, yes, student athletes are an important part of our mission. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Congratulations. [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Are there any other questions? Seeing none, thank you for testifying. [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Welcome. [LB1019]

CURT FRYE: Senators, good afternoon. My name is Curt Frye, C-u-r-t F-r-y-e, and I'm also here today in support of LB1019. As president of Wayne State College, I want to

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thank you for considering both these projects and for all you do in support of the Nebraska State College System. For a very long time the Carhart Science Building on the campus of Wayne State College has been the top priority for the Board of Trustees. I bring you good news in that we are near the point of identifying all funding to complete the final two phases of the renovation, and I can assure you that for many years now Chadron State and Peru State were rooting for Wayne State to get this building finished. I'm pleased to report that we'll be able to complete Carhart in multiple phases using over \$3 million in privately raised funds, capital improvement fees, college cash funds, and support from LB309 Building Renewal Task Force. We know that the long-phased approach was the only way to accomplish this specific project but also understand that the phased approach increased the overall cost of the project significantly. I want to tell you that Chadron State and Peru State have been rooting for us to get this done and I'm here today to root for their projects. And with that project nearing completion, I'm pleased to report that we have a record number of applications for our Rural Health Opportunities Program, the RHOP Program, for the coming year. Carhart Science is critically important to the RHOP students. These students go on to serve healthcare needs throughout the rural areas of Nebraska. In support of my colleagues here, I want to note that I was a graduate student at Chadron State College in the mid-'70s and used Armstrong and the pool there during the summers I spent at the campus. It was already in need of some improvements at that time, and I know it's had little in the way of capital improvements since then. I'll also tell you that I graduated with my master's degree in Armstrong. It was an August day and it was 110 degrees and it was miserable, although I did get a diploma. I was pleased with that. My son attended Peru State College in the mid-'90s and commented at that time about the poor condition of the Oak Bowl, and I was able to see that for myself when I visited him there. We all benefit Nebraska when these state facilities are kept current and meet the needs of our students. I'm pleased to be here today to support Chadron and Peru and their projects. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Thank you very much. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you. [LB1019]

CURT FRYE: You bet. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Welcome. [LB1019]

ASHLEY RIESEN: Hello. Good afternoon, Senator Heidemann and the members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Ashley Riesen, A-s-h-l-e-y R-i-e-s-e-n. I'm a student at CSC and I'm here to support LB1019 and I am here specifically for the CSC Armstrong project. I am a member of the track team but I'm also a native of Chadron, so I support the state college and the community as a whole and how much this can be improved. As a community member, I grew up watching CSC basketball and volleyball games. The bleachers are considered very unsafe. Small children often fall through them; elderly can catch a leg. And actually on the bottom left-hand corner there's a boy

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in a white shirt. He's not that big of a football player but he's actually known for breaking a bleacher. Although embarrassing, it just proves that it can be a real danger. As a potential athlete, the facility is kind of embarrassing. It's unattractive and outdated and has filled many needs for a long time. But with the recruits from Wyoming coming in, oftentimes their high school gyms and facilities are often better than those of the college that they're trying to be recruited by. So it's not all that advantageous in their eyes to get a downgrade in the athletic...to go on to second education. People also, I've heard, I don't experience this personally but when it spills over into other sports, the locker room situation, oftentimes the volleyball players have to share and the basketball players have to share with their opponents for that week. So I just don't see that as a big pep. As a current participant, my interest points include the pool. It's used community wide and for classes and injured student athletes. So it has...serves a great purpose and has a high need, especially in the winter months, but it's usually out of order and the class or the times for operation are kind of difficult to meet. The graduation is also a big deal. If your parents flew all the way from California to watch you graduate and walk across the stage, and they got here and they had to watch it on a TV in a separate building, I don't know that that has the same effect. And most important is the varsity weightroom. It's cramped, outdated, and the track team has actually made their own weightroom in the corner of the PAC. We've completely given up on trying to facilitate time and schedule enough time in between 100 football players and 100 track players to get all of us ran through in a considerable fashion that's not 5:00 a.m. or 8:30 on Sunday nights, so I find that to be kind of sad. There is a report from October 2011 that said there are 404 student athletes. That means a percentage of those kids need to get a weightroom every week and that seems almost impossible to schedule in our facility. So thank you for your time and if there's any questions... [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Thank you for making the trip in and testifying today. I'm sure it was probably an early morning this morning and will be late tonight if you go back tonight. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you for coming in. [LB1019]

ASHLEY RIESEN: Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Welcome. [LB1019]

WILL JACKSON: Good afternoon, Senator Heidemann, members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Will Jackson, that's W-i-l-l J-a-c-k-s-o-n. I am a student at Peru State College. I also serve as Peru State's student representative on the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State College System. In addition to that, I am a three-year letter winner as a member of Peru State football team. I am here today specifically in support of LB1019 and I wanted to share my experience about the Oak Bowl. My personal experience is as a Peru State football player. I just want to first say that it's a positive and awesome experience. If you ever...we'd like to invite you down to a game. There's a lot of people that come down and it's just...the trees in the background, it's just

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a beautiful atmosphere. However, there are legitimate safety concerns and it's almost an embarrassment for recruits, for southeast Nebraska, as well as the community of Peru and the rest of southeast Nebraska. We all know how Nebraska weather can change outdoor festivities and events, and sometimes when it rains for three days, two days straight, we have to drive all the football players, 120 of us have to get in school vans or drive our own cars to Auburn and practice at the old middle school, which is now the...and Senator Fulton can explain this more, but it's now the head school district office. It's the old middle school and there's an old field there. Sometimes we have to practice there because the field is too bad and we've got to, you know, give it rest, time to recover. You know with cleats, it just takes time. In 2009 we were looking to play Buena Vista University, it's a DIII school up in Iowa, and it was kind of an agreement that they really wanted to play on FieldTurf. Now at the Oak Bowl, we do not have FieldTurf and the agreement was we would play at Falls City, in a high school stadium that had FieldTurf, and we, you know, kind of got the community involved and we played there for a home game because we do not have turf. In addition to what other people before me have testified, the field house is in serious, horrible condition. We cannot watch film studies, we have to break up our whole football schedule to try to fit everyone in this one tiny room where you might have...you know, I played outside linebacker and a little bit special teams, and you might have 25 guys and that's all you can squeeze. Sometimes when you get a defensive session in, you have to squeeze, you know, 60-70 guys in a room and there's just not the room available. In addition to that, Dr. Hanson mentioned that we just joined the Heartland of America Athletic Conference, called the HAAC. We are the only institution in that conference that's a public institution. And with that said, I have made...I have traveled with the football team and seen these private institutions that we've played and the facilities don't even compare to ours. They have everything from PA systems, awesome stands, great community support, nice bathrooms, beautiful skyboxes, and of course lights and turf. I graduated from Omaha Northwest High School in 2008. The stadium there is called Nile Kinnick Stadium. Was built there in the '70s when the school was built, '71. That stadium has a seating capacity of 6,000. Now I've only probably played in front of about 4,000 when I was a Class A athlete, but to come to Peru State College was just almost embarrassing when I went and looked at the...there's only seating room for 890 people. And when people go and sit on the hills on the grass there, it's a legitimate hazard for people, for elderly to walk up there and even kids. It's just one wrong step and they could fall and just roll down the hill. I was just almost embarrassed. I came from a Class A high school with all these awesome facilities of a public institution and went to another public institution of higher learning and saw this. Kind of in closure, if this bill was passed these facilities would set the foundation for the future of Peru State athletics. And it doesn't just affect football. It affects all athletes. We could have a future soccer program. Even our intramurals could use this facility. You know, studies show that when institutions have awesome athletics, then it has a direct influence on academics. Student athletes typically have better grades. And the last thing, it would further showcase southeast Nebraska. So thank you for your time and I can answer any

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questions at this time. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Any questions? I have...Senator Hansen first. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. Will, thanks for being here. Ashley said there were 404 student athletes at Chadron. How many are there at Peru? [LB1019]

WILL JACKSON: I don't quite have the exact information on that but we can get to that later. But it's got to be just a little bit smaller. If I would estimate, it would probably be just around 300. [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: Probably about 250 to 275,... [LB1019]

WILL JACKSON: Okay. [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: ...somewhere in that range. [LB1019]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: You talked about Buena Vista, I think was the name of the college. You went down to Falls City which I believe is Jug Brown Stadium and they have FieldTurf. And the school that utilizes that stadium is Falls City High and then Sacred Heart, which is actually a private school, but Falls City is a C-1 school. What do you compare the condition of Jug Brown or the C-1 school plays versus the Oak Bowl? [LB1019]

WILL JACKSON: I wouldn't say it's very high state of the art, but it does have elements that we do not have in terms of the FieldTurf. That playing surface is...serves as a benefit. Some athletes like it; some others don't. But to answer your question, I mean they had everything. It was a night game, played in the evening, then it got dark. They had lights. We can't do that at Peru State. All our games have been traditionally at 1:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. because we don't have lights. And there was the stands at Falls City at that stadium were very nice, you know, gradual declines for people to walk and visit and watch the Peru State football game. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Senator Wightman. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: I'll try to limit this to one question. Thank you, Senator Heidemann. Thank you, Will, for being here. You speak well for Peru College. [LB1019]

WILL JACKSON: Well, thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: I think we've heard testimony here today that the seating

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capacity at the Oak Bowl is about 800 and frequently you have crowds as large as 2,100 or 2,300 I think. I guess I haven't heard or maybe missed it. How many would you be able to seat in the enlarged Oak Bowl? And if you don't know, maybe somebody else would answer that. [LB1019]

WILL JACKSON: Yeah, I don't have that information of what it would increase seating to. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Could you identify yourself, if you're going to say, just for the transcribers. [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: Dan Hanson. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Okay. [LB1019]

DAN HANSON: The seating plan is about 2,000. It's pretty rare it would go over. (Inaudible) probably normally be in a range of 1,200 to 1,700 (inaudible) for a normal... [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: And the reason I said that, it doesn't look all that much larger on the photographs that we have here but apparently is. [LB1019]

WILL JACKSON: It widens. It widens the area. I mean you just got to go down and see it for yourself because it's very narrow, that seating section. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Right. [LB1019]

WILL JACKSON: And it's just very steep so that's why you only get 890 seats there. So under that plan it would kind of widen out a little bit so then you can fit a little more seats. And traditionally, when we've been able to pull those crowds, they sit around, it's kind of a bowl how it's kind of, you know, in the middle of the hill there, and people would sit on the grass, like I explained, and that was definitely true in the '90s when we had big playoff games. We would exceed 2,300 people and they would just sit on the hill and have a blanket or lawn chairs. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: I would assume it is more likely that larger crowds will attend when you have...well, when you're accessible to more people I think,... [LB1019]

WILL JACKSON: Right. That's correct. [LB1019]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: ...to people like myself. Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Thank you for your testimony. [LB1019]

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WILL JACKSON: Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Is anyone else wishing to testify in favor of LB1019? Does anyone wish to testify in opposition of LB1019? Does anybody want to testify in the neutral position on LB1019? [LB1019]

MARSHALL HILL: (Exhibit 7) I will remember this time, Senator Heidemann. I'm Marshall Hill, executive director of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, M-a-r-s-h-a-l-l H-i-l-l. Before I make my remarks on the bill, I want to respond to some of the things I've heard you say this afternoon and state our appreciation for your obvious understanding of the need for the range of Nebraska postsecondary education institutions that we have. It's clear we need the university, it's clear we need community colleges, and it's clear we need the state colleges. And we are blessed in this state to have you fully understand that and we all appreciate it. Since 1991, the Nebraska Constitution has called on the Coordinating Commission to review higher education construction projects that are funded with tax dollars. Furthermore, statutes require that the commission review and approve such projects before state warrants can be issued on appropriated funding. If the commission disapproves a project, the state warrants cannot be issued for that funding. The constitution and statutes also assign the commission responsibility for statewide comprehensive planning for postsecondary education and that includes aspects of facilities construction on institution campuses. Basically, there are several points that are emphasized in that. One is that institutions should not deal with their facilities on an ad hoc basis but should have a comprehensive plan for themselves for how new facilities would fit into their overall planning, and second that overall planning and the facilities that make up those plans would support the institution's goals, missions, and the state's goals in the comprehensive plan. And we've made emphasis and emphasize that adequate state funding should be available for maintenance, repair, and renovation of construction projects. The commission has worked very closely with all sectors of Nebraska higher education to develop and periodically revise this comprehensive plan, which among other things governs our review of these kinds of projects. That has worked. The process has saved the state of Nebraska millions of dollars and here's how that works. Basically, a postsecondary institution submits a facility request to the Coordinating Commission for review. Included in that request is a cost estimate. We negotiate and talk with the proposing institution and sometimes disagree on size and scope, and sometimes the institution then lowers its cost request. That is exactly what happened in the case of the Armstrong Gymnasium at Chadron State College. In 2006 the college submitted an application for the project to the Coordinating Commission. In that application the college proposed an allocation of \$15.4 million in state funds. After consultation with the commission staff, the college lowered its request to \$11.82 million with another \$1.25 million to come from private donations. The commission approved that updated proposal with those amounts. Those amounts have now been inflated over

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the years to the request that you have in front of you, which we support, which we fully support. This is a project which has gone through our process. You are provided then an independent assessment of the appropriateness of the amount that's being requested. Before I talk about the Peru request, I want to mention that the commission has had a longstanding involvement with Peru State College. The commission this spring is, in its current form, 20 years old, 20 years old. We were authorized and placed in the Nebraska Constitution in 1991 and then put in place in early '93...'92, sorry. And shortly after we assumed our current form, the Legislature asked us to look at the fate of Peru State College. At that time, which was before I came to Nebraska, I understand that the State College System itself was talking about the possibility of moving Peru from its current location to Nebraska City. The supporters of the University of Nebraska were more interested in closing Peru than anything else. The commission did a study, recommended that Peru stay where it is but meet certain performance targets and focus on certain tasks. They have done that and more than succeeded, and so we support their efforts. It's a beautiful campus. The state ought to be proud of it. This afternoon you've heard a lot of comments about the need for modifying these facilities and updating these facilities at Peru. We don't dispute that at all. We have not, though, had the opportunity to provide you with an independent assessment of the appropriateness of the dollars requested, so if you go forward you'll be doing so without that, without that benefit, a benefit we think is important, but that's the reason why I'm testifying in a neutral capacity today. I'd be pleased to respond to any questions you might have. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Are there any questions? Thank you for coming in and testifying today. I'm sure, we'll see how we handle this in Appropriations, but eventually the Peru State project will definitely be before you. [LB1019]

MARSHALL HILL: Yes, it would, either through the normal process that would have had it come to us prior to it coming to you or after coming to you. If you approve a certain amount and then it comes to us, it makes our negotiating capacity significantly weakened on whether or not we can approve a lesser amount. I think you realize that. And once again, this...it may indeed be that we would recommend approval of the full amount requested. All I'm saying now is that we have not had the opportunity to go through our normal review process and, therefore, I cannot enthusiastically recommend to you funding of this project in the same way I can the Chadron project. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: We find this does happen though, and correct me if I'm wrong, but like through the LB605 process where we appropriate money and as the projects come up then they come before you, but the money is actually already in there. [LB1019]

MARSHALL HILL: Banked, yes. [LB1019]

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SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Yes. So this isn't...this isn't unusual. [LB1019]

MARSHALL HILL: Outside the LB605 process, it is unusual, it's my understanding. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Okay. [LB1019]

MARSHALL HILL: Yes. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: I'd have to go back and research that a little bit but... [LB1019]

MARSHALL HILL: So would I, Senator, and I will do that and get back to you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Okay. Thank you. Are there any other questions? Seeing none, thank you. [LB1019]

MARSHALL HILL: Okay. Thank you. [LB1019]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Is anyone else wishing to testify in the neutral position on LB1019? Seeing none, I believe Senator Harms had indicated he wanted to waive closing. He still does. With that, we will close the public hearing on LB1019 and we are done for the day. Thank you. [LB1019]