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Transcriber's Office

Appropriations Committee
February 07, 2012

[LB958 LB1048 LB1146]

The Committee on Appropriations met at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 7, 2012, in Room 1003 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on LB958, LB1048, and LB1146. Senators present: John Harms, Vice Chairperson; Tony Fulton; Tom Hansen; Heath Mello; John Nelson; Jeremy Nordquist; and John Wightman. Senators absent: Lavon Heidemann, Chairperson, and Danielle Conrad.

SENATOR HARMS: Okay. Yeah, let's go. I'm going to go ahead and call the meeting to order, if I can...or the hearings to order, if I can. First, let's have some introductions. I know Senator Mello would like to start first.

SENATOR MELLO: Heath Mello, District 5, south Omaha and midtown.

SENATOR NELSON: Senator John Nelson, as you know, from District 6, adjoining yours in Omaha.

SENATOR HOWARD: (Laugh) Across the hall from you.

SENATOR HARMS: And Liz is our fiscal analyst, and Anne is our committee clerk. My name is John Harms; I'm Vice Chair, represent the 48th District. Lavon Heidemann, who's the Chair, is ill today; he represents District 1 in Elk Creek.

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: John Wightman, District 36, Lexington, Nebraska.

SENATOR HANSEN: Tom Hansen, District 42, Lincoln County.

SENATOR HOWARD: It's nice to meet you all.

SENATOR HARMS: (Exhibits 1 and 2) We have...our page is Christina. And so if you have any information you'd like to give her, or...she's very good, and she'll take care of whatever your needs are at this time. Please shut off all your cell phones, if you would, please. Testifier sheets are on the testifier table and are near the back door. Fill the sheets out completely and put in the box on the table when you testify. At the beginning of your testimony please state and spell your name. A nontestifier sheet is located near the back door. If you do not want to testify but would like to record your support or opposition only, fill this sheet out if you will not be publicly testifying. If you have printed materials, we would like to have 12 copies. And just give those to Christina before you speak; that would be helpful. Today we're going to use the time clock. And so in an effort to be fair to all that want to testify today, the Appropriations Committee will be using the light system. The principal introducer will not have a time limit. We do urge you to keep your testimony concise and on topic. All testifiers following will be given five

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minutes on the light system sitting on the testifier table. You will notice a green light when you start your testimony. And when you have one minute left, the yellow light will turn on. And when the red light turns on, please conclude your testimony. Following the principal's introduction, we will have those who would be proponents or those who would be in favor of the bill. Then we'll ask for opponents, and then we'll ask for those in neutral testimony. I will...since we're starting with those in favor of the bill, we do have two letters in support of LB958, one from the Nebraska Nurses Association and one from the Nebraska Hospital Association. Welcome. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you. Thank you, Senator Harms and members of the committee. For the record, I am Senator Gwen Howard; that's H-o-w-a-r-d. And I represent District 9. LB958 would appropriate \$150,000 per year to the Nursing Faculty Student Loan Act. This program was originally created by the Legislature in 2005 but has not been funded in recent years. Nebraska's demand for healthcare workers is growing and will only continue to increase as its population ages. RNs are the largest segment of the healthcare work force and are vital to the care of all populations but especially the aging. In order to have a nursing work force to meet our growing needs, we must increase the enrollment capacity of our nursing education programs in Nebraska. Expansion of Nebraska's nursing education program will be determined by our ability to enhance several factors: one, clinical sites and clinical preceptors; and two, classroom space; and three, qualified faculty. LB958 will address the last of these factors. Right now the average age of nurse faculty members is increasing, particularly in doctoral-prepared faculty; many of these faculty members are nearing the age of retirement. Additionally, higher compensation in clinical and private-sector settings is luring current and potential nurse educators away from teaching, especially as the cost of advanced nursing degrees continues to rise. LB958 would fund a program that forgives student loans for nurses who want to become nurse faculty members. This is where it all begins in solving the nursing shortage. This is a program that will assist nurses who want to teach other nurses. And I'm sure you remember yesterday on the floor the discussion regarding the shortage of nursing, especially in western Nebraska. The need increases, and we're facing an increasing shortage. Thank you for your time and your attention to LB958, and I really urge you to look at passing this forward. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: Senator Howard, thank you very much... [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you, sir. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: ...for your testimony. Do we have any questions? Go ahead, Senator. [LB958]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you, Senator Harms. Senator Howard, would this bring nursing faculty at UNMC or UNO or... [LB958]

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SENATOR HOWARD: You know, I... [LB958]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...clear across the state? If we have a... [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: ...I believe right now... [LB958]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...program at Kearney, would this include... [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Right. [LB958]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...Kearney too? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Well, I believe right now it's at UNL. And, certainly, if they have the money, they're going to be teaching this in other locations. I...it's always contingent on the finances, isn't it? [LB958]

SENATOR HANSEN: Um-hum. What about community colleges? Would this include... [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Well, this is really... [LB958]

SENATOR HANSEN: I don't know what their faculty...if they're doctorate students. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Right. And I don't know that they offer those higher-level courses at the community college. Again, this is for faculty that will be teaching, instructing the nursing students. And I don't know that the higher level is, unfortunately... [LB958]

SENATOR HANSEN: I don't think so either. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: ...at the community colleges. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: They would require a master's degree. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Oh, you would be a... [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: Yes. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: ...person to ask. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: They require the same credentials. They require a master's degree in nursing to teach. [LB958]

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SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: You're welcome. [LB958]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: Senator Wightman. [LB958]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: I know. He's a good...Senator Harms... [LB958]

SENATOR HANSEN: A good resource too. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: We forget he's here, and he's our expert on that. [LB958]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Would this include undergraduate students or just graduate?
[LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Well, this is to fund...this is to fund the educational program for
the instructors for the nursing courses. Are you thinking of the students? [LB958]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: They'd already be on the faculty before they... [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: These are... [LB958]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: ...qualified? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: ...be people wanting to get their advanced degree to go on the
faculty and teach. [LB958]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Okay. So it would be graduate students; it would be beyond
bachelor's. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: I think for that position it would be graduates...you know, would
have to have the higher-level degree. [LB958]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: And that's where the funding issue comes in. Already nurses, but
they need to move on to get the credentials to teach. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Wightman. Senator Nelson. [LB958]

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SENATOR NELSON: Thank you, Senator Harms. I'm kind of interested in the second statement here on the statement of intent. If you...do you have that? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Let's see if we do. Oh, can you just read it to me? I don't think we brought that. [LB958]

SENATOR NELSON: This...well, all right. "The program provides student loan forgiveness for nurses in master's or doctorate programs who agree to become faculty members... [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Um-hum. [LB958]

SENATOR NELSON: ...at an accredited public or private college nursing"...so this is an incentive program? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Right, it's a funding so they can go on. I've talked to a lot of nurses who said: We'd like to do this, but we really need some financial support in order to leave our job. [LB958]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. And then it goes on to say what the maximum...\$5,000 per year. I guess, out of curiosity, where else would people with a master's...nurses with a master's or doctorate, where else would they go, except to teach? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Well, the problem is we don't have that many of them. [LB958]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay, you just need more. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Well, we need more to be instructors, right. [LB958]

SENATOR NELSON: To be instructors, okay. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: Actually, instructors are very hard to find, John... [LB958]

SENATOR NELSON: Are they? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Yeah. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: ...with the right credentials. [LB958]

SENATOR NELSON: And then, you... [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: That's why it's so hard for the nurses to make that next step, because they don't have the money. That's not the highest-paid profession. [LB958]

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SENATOR NELSON: And then, from the NNA, Beth Furlong, who's a Ph.D. and also a J.D....and you may not be able to (inaudible) this. And she says: "Further, about 450 student nurse applicants were turned away from B.S.N. programs" between 2002 and 2006 "because there was not enough faculty to teach them." Well, our conversation on the floor is that we need more nursing schools. This is news to me that there wasn't enough faculty. Is that consistent? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Well, I've heard this. And, actually, this bill in 2005 was brought in by Marian Price. I was here then, and I supported her. And she was very interested in this because she saw the shortage coming. [LB958]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. So that many student nurses were...that was...back then, not now. Okay. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: It wasn't that long ago. [LB958]

SENATOR NELSON: 2006. That's about five years ago. Okay. Over five years ago. All right, thank you. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: You're welcome. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: Do we have any other questions? Senator Howard, would you like the pleasure of closing... [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Oh... [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: ...later? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: ...do we have anyone here? [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: No, at the end; would you like...? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Oh, thank you, yes. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: Okay. Do we have anyone else that would like to speak in favor of LB958? Well, seeing none, do we have anyone who would be in opposition? [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: ...unless I'm back already. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: Senator Howard. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Well, you've got two letters that support... [LB958]

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SENATOR HARMS: Would you...no, would you wait a minute; I have to go through the process here. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Oh, okay. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: Do we have anyone else who would like to speak in opposition of LB958? Seeing none, do we have anyone who would like to speak in a neutral capacity on LB958? Seeing none, Senator Howard, you're welcome to close, please. [LB958]

SENATOR HOWARD: Such a dutiful audience. (Laugh) I'll make this really brief. To describe the shortage of nursing faculty throughout the U.S., the American Association of Colleges of Nursing uses words like "critical," "dire," "severe." Demand for nurses in nursing education continues to grow while the population of those educated and willing to take nursing faculty jobs decreases. LB958 would provide some assistance to nurses who want to fill this critical need. Thank you for allowing me to bring this to you today. And I'll be here for the second bill. [LB958]

SENATOR HARMS: I thank you for your testimony, Senator Howard. This...now we'll now close the hearing for LB958. (See also Exhibit 3.) We'll now open the hearing for LB1048. Senator Howard. [LB958 LB1048]

SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you, Senator Harms and members of the committee. For the record, I am Senator Gwen Howard, H-o-w-a-r-d, and I represent District 9. LB1048 would increase the appropriation to the early intervention home visitation by \$500,000. The early intervention program includes home visits by nurses, family support workers, and mental health therapists for families at high risk for child abuse and neglect. In 2005 I introduced LB264, the original creation mechanism for the early intervention program. Since then, the program has saved countless dollars and prevented children from being harmed and entering the foster care system. But you don't have to take my word for it. In the January edition of State Legislatures magazine, experts at NCSL had this to say about the early intervention programs: Rigorous evaluations of home visiting practices have shown programs that target families with particular challenges can reduce child abuse, improve parenting skills, and enhance children's health and readiness for school. Investments in these programs have produced significant returns through reduced spending on early childhood healthcare, child welfare, special education, grade retention, and juvenile crime. Home visitation can reduce infant mortality, preterm births, and emergency room visits. And, fortunately, we've had a period of time to actually realize this since my first bill was passed in 2005. And we have seen how effective this program is. There is a critical recognition that Nebraska has far too many children in the foster care system. We're always looking for ways to reduce the number of children coming into the system, to prevent child abuse, and to keep families together. We talk a lot as a body about spending on preventive programs as a way to save money, and we

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often question whether the savings can actually be realized. In this program, savings have been realized. We've saved dollars, and we've saved children. LB1048 is simply an expansion of the successful program. It works. Let's keep it moving forward. And thank you for your time and your consideration of this bill. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Howard... [LB1048]

SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: ...for your testimony. Do we have any questions for Senator Howard? Seeing none, thank you. Would you like the pleasure of closing? [LB1048]

SENATOR HOWARD: I will. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Okay. [LB1048]

SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you. Do we have anyone else who would like to speak in favor of LB1048? Welcome. [LB1048]

BETTY CERNECH: (Exhibit 4) Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Betty Cernech, and I'm here representing the Visiting Nurse Association, the VNA. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Would you spell your last name for us, please. [LB1048]

BETTY CERNECH: Oh, yes, I'm sorry. Cernech, C-e-r-n-e-c-h. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you. [LB1048]

BETTY CERNECH: I'm representing the Visiting Nurse Association, VNA, and Child Saving Institute, CSI, in support of LB1048. I would first like to thank Senator Howard for introducing LB1048 and being such a strong supporter of not only VNA and our mission of serving the most vulnerable, especially infants and young children, but also other projects like this across the state who have the same goals: keeping children safe and in their family home and free of abuse and neglect. LB1048 expands the nurse visitation program, which has been a true success story for VNA and other partners throughout the state. I'd like to share with you how VNA has implemented the funding that the Legislature has provided and share some of our stories and savings for Nebraska in terms of human and financial capital. VNA provides the in-home nursing, and CSI provides the family support and mental health therapy. In three years, where we have three full years of data, of 301 children seen in this project, at VNA and CSI, none had substantiated injuries from abuse or neglect, and 94 percent remained in their

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homes during the time served. The critical issue is to provide early intervention for at-risk families and make sure these little ones are protected and physically and developmentally ready to learn at kindergarten. Successful education is one thing that will help them grow into productive citizens and protective adults. We get referrals from CPS, NDHHS, hospital discharge planners, physicians, and the juvenile courts. We think that CPS and the courts should refer families that present red flags for concern to our projects immediately, so that they can receive the benefit of a preventive approach to keeping their children safe and thriving, versus a punitive approach after the child has suffered abuse or neglect. Just a little bit about some of the families that we've served. A baby born to cognitively delayed parents was removed from the home at birth, due to terrible hygiene and chaos in the home. This family was immediately referred to VNA and, through family support, applied for and received rental assistance, moved into their own home, and demonstrated that they knew how to clean it and keep it clean. That seems so basic to us. They are learning hands-on approaches to baby care that take into account their unique learning styles that are necessary because of their cognitive inability. And the father has willingly engaged in therapy, which is very unusual. Couples like this, buying into the wraparound nature of these services, have a chance to lead a better success rate, with permanency and healthy living conditions for their infant. Many times couples like this aren't given a chance. And they deserve a chance. Another mom, after birth, developed a debilitating anxiety which actually escalated to a severe mental disorder. You can see that these families are really high-risk. The stress and length of time it took just to wash the dishes and feed her infant contributed to her infant failing to grow physically and developmentally. The VNA nurse secured mental health therapy, and the support worker helped her navigate her child's feeding. The thing through all of these scenarios is the critical nature of early intervention into the needs of parents who are not able to care for their child. The average cost of our program, VNA/CSI, is \$3,260 per year per child. Compare this to 120 days of out-of-home placement at \$240, or \$28,800. Reports have shown, as Senator Howard mentioned, that early intervention and in-home visitation really can be successful. So expansion is necessary to handle and increase referrals, to keep the caseloads at 25 per professional, and to increase that additional family support and mental health therapy that's evidenced by the examples given. Thank you for your time and attention. I would be pleased to answer any questions. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you for your testimony. Do we have any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much. [LB1048]

BETTY CERNECH: Thank you. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Senator Fulton has joined the committee. He's from District 29 here in Lincoln. Thank you, Senator. Do we have anyone else who would like to testify in favor of LB1048? [LB1048]

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JUDY HALSTEAD: (Exhibit 5) Thank you very much. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Welcome. [LB1048]

JUDY HALSTEAD: Welcome. My name is Judy Halstead, and it's spelled H-a-l-s-t-e-a-d. I'm the health director for the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, and I'm here to testify in support of LB1048 today. As Betty mentioned, we also were fortunate to be funded under this current program. We receive approximately \$150,000 per year; we have since 2008. And we also receive the benefit of working with an evidence-based model that actually documents the data. And in the information that you're receiving, we've documented some of the data that we have tracked, on the families that we serve. We currently serve 141 families. And those families can come to us when Mom is pregnant or may come to us after the baby is born. We typically are serving, now, these families until the child turns 3. So we believe that we have a number of opportunities to intervene with the families that we're working with. We partner with CEDARS here in Lincoln, and they provide similar to the model that Betty shared. They provide the casework visitation, and we provide the nurse case management for the families. A number of indicators that we do track, obviously, is how well the family is being able to maintain employment, how well they're able to maintain their home. But we also get into the factors that Betty mentioned, which is talking about how well are the parents able to parent their child, how well are they able to maintain their calm and their patience with their children. One of the things that research tells us with child abuse and neglect is that parents have unrealistic developmental expectations about their children. For example, they think that a child should be potty trained by the time that they're 6 months old, and they...while that would seem out of line with anything we would possibly think of, we do know that families who are involved in CPS often have those unrealistic expectations for their children. So a large focus of what we do is spend time working with families on how they interact with their child, how they bond with their child, appropriate developmental expectations for their child, and ways, when they experience the frustration that any parent does with parenting, that they learn how to handle that in a way that they can still meet their child's needs but that they aren't involved with Child Protective Services because of substantiated abuse or neglect. I'm proud to tell you that with the model that we've been working with, which is called Healthy Families America--it is an evidence-based accredited program, and we are working towards accreditation, which we hope we will have next year--it does identify those programs that works effectively with families. And we're very pleased with the data that we've found. As Betty mentioned, we do not have any families who have had substantiated child abuse or neglect cases brought against them while they've been in the program. And so what we're saying is we recognize dollars are hard to come by; we also recognize the state of the child welfare system once those families are already in the system. And so we really feel that this is an investment up-front. We're spending a little bit over \$1,000 per child and family, and we believe that that is well invested. And I want to tell you that because we are also joint city-county funded, by the city of Lincoln and

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by Lancaster County, we believe so much in this model that we have expanded this to our entire home visitation program, and we are using this Healthy Families America model with all of the families we're serving, not just the pilot program. What that does, though, as Betty mentioned, is it does change our caseload. So it does change how many nurses and home visitors can work with the number of families that we work with. Because it is more intense and they are seeing families more often, it does limit the number of families that they can work with. And so continuing this program and expanding this program will help us to serve more. And as Betty mentioned for Omaha and certainly for us for Lincoln, there are many more families than we can serve. But we do believe that it makes a difference; we do believe that we can show you that this dollar investment is saving you substantially in the long haul. And I just encourage you to continue the funding and to expand the funding for other models. Thank you very much. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you very much for your testimony. Do we have any questions? Senator Nelson. [LB1048]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you, Senator Harms. Could you just detail a little about the Healthy Families America... [LB1048]

JUDY HALSTEAD: Model? [LB1048]

SENATOR NELSON: ...model... [LB1048]

JUDY HALSTEAD: Absolutely. [LB1048]

SENATOR NELSON: ...what that involves, the numbers of visitation, or how flexible it is, how...what they operate off of? [LB1048]

JUDY HALSTEAD: Absolutely. The first thing that happens is a family is assessed on a number of indicators. It might be, what is that parent's parenting that they received themselves; it looks at stress; it looks at their ability to care for their child and read their child's cues, if you will. And that is actually documented through an assessment process. The highest-risk families are the ones that score the highest. And they are the ones that are offered the opportunity to be enrolled in the program. And then a plan is tailored specific to that individual family's needs. So it may mean that the nurse and the social worker would visit, each, one time a week. Or if there are warning signs of potential problems--perhaps the visitors have observed the parent inappropriately reprimanding the child or intervening in a way that isn't effective--they may do more visits during that time. Prenatally we do more visits to help prepare the parents for parenthood. And then as the parents are able to handle those, there will be fewer visits, for example. And then we assess on a regular basis how they're achieving the parenting outcomes that are set out for the families. [LB1048]

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SENATOR NELSON: Thank you. Very interesting. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Nelson. Senator Fulton. [LB1048]

SENATOR FULTON: That's all right. Senator Nelson asked... [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Oh, okay. Do we have any other questions? I see none. Thank you very much for your testimony. [LB1048]

JUDY HALSTEAD: Thank you very much. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Do we have anyone else who would like to speak in favor of LB1048? Welcome. [LB1048]

CAROLYN ROOKER: (Exhibits 6 and 7) Thank you so much. Good afternoon, Senator Harms and the Appropriations Committee. My name is Carolyn Rooker. I'm the executive director of Voices for Children in Nebraska. And my name is spelled C-a-r-o-l-y-n Rooker, R-o-o-k-e-r. Voices for Children is here today in support of LB1048, expanding funding for early nurse home visitation programs. We believe that this bill is a first step towards expanding Nebraska's commitment to high-quality evidence-based home visiting programs. High-quality home visiting programs have been shown to produce \$5.70 in fiscal savings for every tax dollar spent. Nebraska spends \$2.5 million less per year than the national average on home visiting services despite their proven outcomes. We support home visiting as an evidence-based strategy that can help our children by improving birth outcomes. Access to a home visitor for at-risk moms contributes to overall maternal and child health. It reduces medical costs and secures a positive start for the child. These programs have also been proven to prevent child maltreatment. Child victims of abuse and neglect has been on the rise for the past decade in Nebraska. Home visiting is a proven intervention that has shown the ability to reduce the incidence of child maltreatment. The investment in home visiting is essential for our Nebraska vulnerable children and reforming our child welfare system as a whole. We also believe that quality home visitation programs can provide positive outcomes for children and families. A recent longitudinal study of families who had received home visiting services showed that they were better able to meet their child's needs without government support, including increased employment and a reduction in the use of public benefit programs. We know, without a shadow of a doubt, that the first year of a child's life is extremely crucial and to a large extent determines what the rest of their lives will be like. High-quality home visitation programs can truly make a difference for vulnerable children and families. In summary, it is Voices for Children in Nebraska's perspective that as we seek to reform our child welfare system and keep kids in their homes, investments such as this will be crucial. Please advance this bill and consider further investments and additional measures of quality and

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effectiveness in the future. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you for your testimony. Do we have any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much. [LB1048]

CAROLYN ROOKER: Thank you. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: (Exhibit 8) Do we have anyone else who would like to testify in favor of LB1048? Seeing none, I did want to bring to your attention that we did get a letter of support for LB1048 from the Nebraska Nurses Association. Now we'll move to anyone who is in opposition of LB1048. Seeing none, we'll now move to anyone who would like to speak...I have a blank...neutral, thank you very much. [LB1048]

SENATOR HANSEN: Neutral. Neutral. [LB1048]

SENATOR NELSON: Your mind went into neutral. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah, right. Right. In the neutral capacity. Seeing none, thank you. Senator Howard, you'd like the pleasure of closing, please? [LB1048]

SENATOR HOWARD: I'll make this short and sweet. Most of you know how passionate I am about this program. And thank you, Liz Hruska, for always providing me the information I needed on this. This is the very first bill that I got passed. And I still believe it is one of my most important accomplishments in this Legislature. Early intervention programs are recognized not only in Nebraska but nationally as a particularly effective way to prevent child abuse, keep children and their families together, and save state dollars. Thank you for your support of this effective program. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Howard, for your testimony. [LB1048]

SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you, sir. [LB1048]

SENATOR HARMS: Appreciate it. We'll now close the hearing on LB1048. We'll now open the hearing for LB1146. Senator McGill. I don't see her. Huh? Is she here? Okay, you going to call her? Okay. Did you reach her? [LB1048 LB1146]

BREAK

SENATOR HARMS: Oh, here we go; now we're ready. [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: I literally jogged. Okay. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Welcome, Senator McGill. [LB1146]

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SENATOR MCGILL: Thank you. I have two bills up right now in Transportation. So... [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Well, we're sorry about that. [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: ...doing double duty, actually triple duty because I'm chairing the... [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Okay. [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: ...committee right now as well, so... [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Okay. [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: ...thank you for your patience. Okay. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: You can wait just a few seconds here and get your breath. [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: Thank you. I appreciate that. I'm, of course, state Senator Amanda McGill, here to introduce LB1146, a bill that requests appropriation of funds to carry out the Nebraska Prostitution and Treatment Act. The act was passed in 2006, but funding for the program was vetoed two years in a row by the Governor. The proposed \$20,000 would provide diversion and treatment services to those charged with prostitution. For... I think most of us that are actually here in the room were here during that second veto. I believe that Senator Synowiecki originally proposed, in the year before we were members of the Legislature, about \$750,000 that was originally put in the budget and passed and then vetoed. And then when we were here, it was closer to about \$70,000. So he already took a huge step down in terms of trying to get some treatment. And this bill brings what is pennies in comparison to what he originally sought after and what really is probably necessary...what is necessary to deal with this problem. But I come to you with what I think is a very reasonable proposal in terms of actually allowing us to put this treatment into service in our state since we have a law on the books to try to deal with this problem. It is not easy to assist someone who is trying to live or leave a life in the sex industry. There are many complex factors to consider and very specialized intervention that is required in order for these individuals to make the necessary life changes. The vast majority of those involved in prostitution or sex trafficking are not participating by choice. In fact, this is just one of two bills I'm bringing this year dealing with human trafficking and sex trafficking. I have a whole package of bills that I'll be introducing in the Judiciary Committee next week. But these individuals, you know, many of them are lured or recruited or threatened into the industry. Many were sexually abused as children themselves. They're homeless, and that's how they're picked up by

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some pimp, who manipulates them. In some cases, a man will make the young woman--many of them are teenagers--think that they love them and then get them under their control. And it becomes a lot like a domestic violence situation, where it's hard for a woman to get out or to want to get out or is threatened about leaving. These individuals can quickly become locked in a cycle of control, intimidation, and abuse that prevents them from leaving the industry. And in order for us to understand the need of this population, we need to accept that nearly all of these individuals are indeed victims of abuse. Those involved in prostitution often do not immediately seek help or self-identify as victims, due to a variety of factors, including lack of trust, self-blame, or specific instructions by the traffickers or pimps regarding how to behave when talking to law enforcement or social services. So one issue we're seeing in Omaha and Lincoln is, even if a woman is picked up for prostitution by law enforcement, she is often not willing to rat out the pimp who's actually running the ring. And so I have a bill trying to work...and my bill--other bill--incorporates some training for law enforcement on how to connect with that woman so she can feel safe and feel more comfortable coming forward and talking about the situation she has been living in, so that we can press charges against some of the men higher up in the ring and who are running these sex rings and luring women into it. But right now, women are too afraid to rat out the people who are really in charge or who are running those rings. So given all these complex factors, we know Nebraska needs adequate resources to identify victims of sex trafficking and provide meaningful help for those victims. These intervening professionals must have a highly specialized skill set that is specifically tailored to meet the needs of this population. While there are talented individuals currently working in our state, Nebraska does not have adequate resources to provide this specialized and meaningful intervention across the state. We also must consider what Nebraska has available for victims once they leave the sex-trafficking industry. So they've been living under some other gentleman, no resources of their own, and usually have a substance abuse problem as well, because that's one of the ways that the manipulation is working. Do we have a place to go, for a woman, if she's choosing to get out of prostitution? Many leave their entire lives behind: their income, their housing, their transportation, their entire lives. The average age of entry into the commercial sex industry in the U.S. is between 12 and 14 years old. Once a child is rescued from sex-trafficking industry, where does that child go? Are we returning the child to family members that initially got the child involved in the sex industry? I'm aware of one facility in Omaha, the Wellspring center, that specializes in treatment of adults leaving the sex-trafficking industry. We need additional resources to handle this problem effectively as Nebraska improves its ability to identify victims and provide rehabilitative services. This bill provides a modest appropriation to begin this specialized intervention and ongoing treatment. A provision of LB1145, which is my other bill that I'm introducing, provides that a comprehensive study will be completed regarding human trafficking in our state. And my hope is that that study will help us better direct our resources into what programming is best available. And obviously, this bill in particular goes towards what Senator Synowiecki set up several years ago. So with that, thank you for your time and your patience with

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me and my slow delivery. (Laugh) I'm still a little winded. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Well, thank you very much for your testimony. Do we have any questions? Senator Nelson. [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: Um-hum. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you, Senator Harms. Thank you, Senator McGill. You mentioned Wellspring. Is that a 501(c)3, or is it...? [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: Yeah, it's through the Salvation Army. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: With the...how many people are they able to handle, do you know? [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: It's not a...I don't think they're here right now, so I can't give you the direct answer, but it's not very many at a time. And it is...one of the things we struggle with, with these women, is getting...is encouraging them to want to create a better life for themselves. Because many of them do come from such bad backgrounds, they don't think they're ever going to amount to anything. And so having the resources available so we can say, look, here is this better opportunity for you...when Wellspring right now only, you know, handles a handful of women. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: I...I support what you're doing; I...you've got to make a start. But \$20,000... [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: I know; it's not very much money. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: ...isn't going to go very far. What... [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: It isn't going to go very... [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: ...where would you apply that? I mean, trying to move them into a different residential... [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: It certainly wouldn't give them housing, that's for sure. This would be more on the treatment end of things. And, heck, I would love it if we could put Senator Synowiecki's \$700,000 into this initially. And I'll be honest, I talked to Senator Nordquist about this, because he worked for Senator Synowiecki at the time, and, you know, this was a number he and I kind of threw out to get the ball rolling. But I would see that this initial funding--and see how it goes--would probably be used in an area like south Omaha, where there is a high rate of cases dealing with prostitution there...but in some part of Omaha. [LB1146]

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SENATOR NELSON: So work with them while they're incarcerated? I mean, how do you...? [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: Afterwards. And, ideally, what I ideally would like to pursue in the future is some sort of...like we have drug courts to get rid of that drug conviction, I would like to see a prostitution court eventually in Nebraska, where a woman could go through a diversion process and get that wiped from her record. And so that's my ultimate dream, which I still need to develop and flesh out more in the future. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. Well, thank you. [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: Um-hum. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Nelson. Do we have any other questions? Seeing none, Senator McGill, would you like the pleasure of closing, or would you like to waive? [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: I probably won't. I'll sit in here a little bit, but I'll go back to Transportation. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Okay. All right. Thank you very much. [LB1146]

SENATOR MCGILL: All right? Thank you very much. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: You're welcome. Do we have anyone else who would like to testify in favor of LB1146? Welcome. [LB1146]

JACK CHELOHA: Thank you. Good afternoon, Senator and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Jack Cheloha. The first name is spelled J-a-c-k; the last name is C-h-e-l-o-h-a. And I'm the registered lobbyist for the city of Omaha. I want to testify in support of LB1146. And I want to thank Senator McGill for introducing this bill. Back in 2006, I then worked for the city of Omaha as their lobbyist; I continue to do so today. I'm familiar with Senator Synowiecki's original bill; it was LB1086. And he also had an accompanying bill that year, LB1253. There was kind of a...after a lengthy study of the issue of prostitution statewide, there was kind of a one-two punch introduced to the Legislature. One of them had to do with the treatment and setting up a program to help people in the industry to try and get out of it. But then there was also a penalty phase. And ultimately both bills did pass, but, unfortunately, the funding for the treatment and intervention was vetoed, and unfortunately it was not overridden. And even when they went for a lower amount in the next, I think, biennium, that too was vetoed as well. And so...and we just...and I feel bad about that, because I feel like maybe as a lobbyist I didn't succeed with trying to convince the administration that this

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was an important aspect. I remember, looking at the file over the lunch hour today, where the Governor, you know, sent his veto letter to you, the Legislature, saying that he had a hard time funding this because he felt that we were putting state resources into those people that have worked in an industry where they were breaking the law. Well, you know, I guess I...we need to keep working on the administration, because, granted, yes, they are in an industry where they broke the law, but ultimately, as Senator McGill said, they want to try to get out of that industry, or they feel trapped, or they're forced, etcetera. This is a very modest amount. We do have, you know, some facilities available, as she mentioned, the Wellspring program in Omaha, which, you know, would provide treatment. But there's really more of a calling for even more treatment and intervention. This is, really, an issue that comes to the forefront with a lot of our eastern neighborhood associations within the city of Omaha. What else can I tell you? I was, once again, looking at my notes. Our city prosecutor testified back in 2006. And this is an ongoing problem, and it's been going on for a long time. And, I mean, I guess, you know, people call prostitution "the oldest profession," so obviously it's been going on for a long time. But we really would ask the state to be a partner and help with this treatment and intervention. It seems, one last note, that our city prosecutor did point out that roughly back in 2006 he determined, based on the number of court cases that he went through, that there were about, in our city of our size, about 50 that were really hard-core prostitutes, if you will, and that, you know, those were, if you will, people that we saw over and over again in the court system. So I just thought maybe that would be helpful to you as you evaluate it in terms of, you know, maybe what some of the numbers are like. I tried to get how many cases of prostitution and solicitation do we not only charge but also actually provide arrest warrants on, and I'm still waiting to get that data. And I apologize, I'll try to get it back to you at a later time. But I think it's important to look at this again; \$20,000 is a modest amount, and I would ask you to support the bill. Any questions? [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you for your testimony. Do we have any questions? Senator Nelson. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you, Senator Harms. Just one quick question. The 50 hard-core...that was back in 2006. Would those have been older women as compared with some of the younger women that Senator McGill...like, you know, the 10-, 12-, 14-year-olds? [LB1146]

JACK CHELOHA: Well... [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: You know anything...? [LB1146]

JACK CHELOHA: ...I think maybe that's a good premise to have on that, Senator, at the time, but I can't speak with certainty on it, so I'd better not. [LB1146]

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SENATOR NELSON: All right. [LB1146]

JACK CHELOHA: So thank you. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Nelson. Do we have any other questions? Seeing none, thank you for your testimony. [LB1146]

JACK CHELOHA: Thank you. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Do we have anyone else who would like to speak on behalf, in favor, of LB1146? Welcome. [LB1146]

AL RISKOWSKI: (Exhibits 9, 10, and 11) Thank you. Thank you, Senator Harms and Appropriations. It's wonderful to be able to be here today. And I thank again Senator McGill for her tremendous interest in this area. I'm Al Riskowski, it's R-i-s-k-o-w-s-k-i, executive director of Nebraska Family Council. We became involved with the human trafficking issue five-plus years ago. Just to give a very quick reference as to the extent of the problem, human trafficking has become, by the U.S. Department of Justice estimate, probably the number 1 or 2 largest money-making illegal activity in the world when you compare drugs or illegal arms and human trafficking. Human trafficking is one of the number 1 illegal money makers in the world. We are destination points here in the United States. And specifically Nebraska comes into play because of Interstate 80 running right through the middle of our state. And so we have human trafficking. And in part what I presented before you is a definition of human trafficking, because often you think of only illegal individuals being part of human trafficking. But according to the U.S. Department of Justice, it's inclusive, as well, of U.S. minor citizens or any U.S. citizen who is being held against their own will. And we have found it's a major problem here in our state. I have...one of the sheets that you have before you is--I just received it today--an e-mail from Weysan Dun. Weysan Dun is the special agent of the FBI in charge of the department in Omaha. The FBI set up what they call an Innocence Lost program in Omaha attacking the fact of underage girls specifically and perhaps boys who are being held in the sex industry in the Omaha area. And they felt Omaha is a hot spot, one of 39 cities of which they have set up an Innocence Lost program. And as you can see just in his e-mail he sent me today, just last night they could have used some extra help in regard to a victim that they helped for testing and etcetera. I won't read it, because it's in your possession. But you can see all the number of situations just recently that has been before him and the need that is there. Their Innocence Lost program has been in existence just a little over a year, and they have rescued seven minor children out of the sex trade in the Omaha area. Now, that may not seem like a lot, but when you think of the fact that they've only been in existence a very short time, they're investigating cases, and they've already rescued that many minor girls, not

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counting adult girls being held in the sex trade, I think that's quite significant. Right here in Lincoln, Tom Casady has stated that if you're a runaway on the streets of Lincoln and you're on the street, he said: I don't even have to do a study; I can tell you, just anecdotal, that you've got a better than 50 percent chance of being forced into the sex trade if you're on the street as a runaway minor here in Lincoln. And this is a little study that he did; this is by Tom Casady. We've had some conversations in regard to this. And so he did just a quick study; he selected ten women arrested within the past ten years for prostitution who are now between the ages of 20 and 35. So these girls when they got started were minors. These women have lived a hard life. And these ten subjects combined, this is their record here in Lincoln: 105 runaway reports--this is just ten girls--105 runaway reports, 44 child abuse/neglect cases, and 35 sexual assaults prior to their 19th birthday. So what I just put in your hands is the Health and Human Services report. And it just...why I left that with you, because it...in the report it talks about all the various needs that these girls have as they're rescued out of the sex trade, even adults, that they have...from medical...you've got the...not only the physical health, because many of these girls have been forced and required to do sex acts eight to ten times a day, and so they have tremendous health issues. They often have substance abuse issues. They have mental health issues. They have legal issues, educational, crime, all kinds of assistance, from anger management and even spiritual issues that they have. And I think they address that very well in this report. And so I leave you all of that information and try and briefly present that to you. So thank you for your time. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Yeah, thank you very much for your interesting testimony. Do we have any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much. [LB1146]

AL RISKOWSKI: All right, thank you. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Do we have anyone else who would like to speak in favor of LB1146? Seeing none, do we have anyone who would like to testify in opposition of LB1146? [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: (Exhibit 12) Thank you. Good afternoon, Senator Harms, members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Scot Adams, S-c-o-t A-d-a-m-s. I serve as the director of the Division of Behavioral Health for the Department of Health and Human Services, and I am here testifying in opposition to LB1146. The bill appropriates \$20,000 from the General Fund for the next two years to aid in carrying out the provisions of the Nebraska Prostitution Intervention and Treatment Act. This act was passed as LB1086 in 2006. However, the appropriation bill, LB1086A, was vetoed by the Governor. Funding has never been provided to carry out the provisions of the act. There are two reasons for our opposition to the bill. Services for mental health, substance abuse, and problem gambling are available in the community through current programs and funding. Therefore current behavioral health services are available for

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consumers through the behavioral health regions and for Medicaid recipients. This act creates a state-financed benefit program specifically for individuals who participate in prostitution-related activities. Creating a program financed with state general funds to specifically benefit a population that's engaged in illegal actions may be objectionable to most Nebraskans. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you for your testimony. We have any questions? Senator Hansen. [LB1146]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. Director Adams, if this bill calls for \$20,000, do you have any idea how much the department spends now on the interventions that you mentioned--the mental health, substance abuse, and problem gambling, and those community-based services--how much that they would be spending now? [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Approximately \$100 million of the \$170 million appropriated to the Division of Behavioral Health goes to community-based services, including mental health, substance abuse, and problem gambling. [LB1146]

SENATOR HANSEN: Okay. So do you think that any 12-, 14-year-old boy or girl that runs away and gets off a bus in Lincoln could get those services? Are those services available? [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Well, there are community-based services available. Putting aside for the moment all the complications of the particular examples so we can get through those, there would be providers in the community that are able to provide mental health, substance abuse services that could be of assistance to the person. [LB1146]

SENATOR HANSEN: Housing too? Would there be housing available for someone like that that's underage? Or transportation back home? Or... [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Part of the funds that the Division of Behavioral Health administers and works through the regions with is the Homeless Assistance Housing Fund. And so there is about...I want to say that the number is, gosh, I believe \$2.2 million in the current fiscal year for housing-related assistance to persons with those disorders. [LB1146]

SENATOR HANSEN: Okay. And this is all administered through the regions...I don't remember the name. Ours is Region II, so... [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Yes. [LB1146]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...it would be similar to some of those regions. Okay. [LB1146]

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SCOT ADAMS: Yes, we call those Regional Behavioral Health Authorities. [LB1146]

SENATOR HANSEN: Okay. All right. Thank you. [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Yes, sir. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Hansen. Senator Nelson. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you, Senator Harms. Thank you, Scot. I'm just wondering if any of that money that goes to the regions actually gets allocated for intervention or anything of that sort. Or is it just applied to women that happen to get dropped in your lap, you know, because they were arrested and they managed to get away, or something of that sort? Do you follow what I'm saying? I mean, is there actually much money used as far as behavioral health, I mean, and psychiatric assistance and things of that sort? [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: The...of the appropriation given to the Division of Behavioral Health, all of that money is targeted for persons with severe and persistent mental illness or serious substance abuse disorders, and so that is the large focus. And I can say, yes, that--with confidence--that everybody for whom we are reimbursing services, to providers, does have one of those disorders. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. Thank you. [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: And I can...part of the reason why I have confidence in that is that not only are the Regional Behavioral Health Authorities monitoring and managing that, but the Magellan Behavioral Health agency is registering all of those people or authorizing their services. So there is both processes involved. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: So we...we've got this already in place here but never got it funded. Do you think that funding it, then, with even \$20,000 a year is just being duplication and not warranted? Is...would that be your opinion? [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Well, I think that the line that we're...that this administration would prefer not to cross is funding services that are typically for persons who have committed a crime in that sense. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Nelson. Senator Wightman. [LB1146]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you, Senator Harms. Do you have any records that these community-based organizations have provided any intervention with regard to

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prostitution? [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Sir, I...no, I do not have any particular hard data. We do not ask that question at this time. It has not been part of the charge or mission given to us. And so we have not...we typically don't track that systematically across the network and the system for Behavioral Health. Anecdotally and from my experience at Catholic Charities, I know that there were a number of persons who involved themselves in a variety of activities, including prostitution, who sought treatment for their addictions and sought help for that. [LB1146]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: I guess I'm not quite sure, Director, how you differentiate between drug addiction--which, obviously, we do a lot through behavioral disabilities--and prostitution intervention. It seems to me that both of them are frequently involving people involved in crime. Can you tell me what the distinction is between those two? [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: I think in the case of treating the substance abuse disorder, in and of itself it may or may not be an illegal activity. Alcoholism is not a crime, and so...for example. Neither would be holding prescription medications, necessarily, not necessarily a crime per se. So there are instances where--on the side of the substance abuse--where the focus is on the substance-abusing behavior. That is not, in and of itself, a crime. Associated with substance abuse behavior many times there is illegal activity. That's not the focus of the treatment, if you will; it is the substance-abusing behavior. That per se is not illegal. In the case of this bill, we see that the behavior itself, the focus of the attention, is itself illegal. [LB1146]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Okay. Can you tell me whether we use any general funds for gambling addiction? [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: We do have general funds that are spent for problem-gambling services. Yes, sir. [LB1146]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: And... [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: And those come both from the lottery and a cash fund, so not General Fund but from cash fund and from the lottery. [LB1146]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: And, obviously, a lot of this also is crime, is it not? Some of it is. [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Some of it is, yes, sir. [LB1146]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you. [LB1146]

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SENATOR HARMS: Thank you, Senator Wightman. Any other questions? I do have just more of a comment for you. Just listening to our people who have testified in regard to this particular issue, it's pretty evident to me whatever we are doing is not working. Regardless of what we're saying here, it's just not working. When this is number 1 and number 2 in the nation in the amount of illegal money that is being funded into this kind of structure, there's something wrong. And I think it's time that Nebraska starts to address the issue. You've got all these young children, young women, that are being forced into prostitution; you can't tell me that they're going to go to one of these community-based programs. They don't even know where they are; they don't know how to get to them. I guess I would pose this question to you, what would you think if we designed a program in Health and Human Services, moved some money around and actually designed a program specifically for people of this nature, because it's a phenomenal issue here we can't any longer hide. What would your thoughts be? [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: There would be a couple things that I would say to that, sir. First of all, I agree that the problem has size and scope and significance. Secondly, the Division of Behavioral Health would be absolutely willing to work with any group, legislative, private, or otherwise, to help improve services, training, activities to address the problem. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: My biggest fear is that...this program has to get right down to the very basics. And we have to start with law enforcement, and we have to really listen to the people that are in the field. And I sometimes worry a little bit about, when you start getting into these areas, that we're on a whole other level, and the rest of the world is on a level that's trying to deal with the issue. And I guess if something like this would ever develop, that it really needs to get down to the very basics, to the hard core, what the real issues are. And whatever dollars we've got, we need to make some real effort to correct this, because it's wrong. [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Um-hum. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: And I don't think we can tolerate any more of this. So that's my comments, and I apologize for that, but... [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: No, that's fine. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: ...do you have any other questions? Senator Nelson. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: Just a follow-up question. We...thank you. We heard testimony that trafficking was the number 1 illegal money maker, which kind of amazes me when you compare with the drug traffic and millions and millions of dollars. Do you have any

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comment on that? Do you think it's... [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Well, I would simply say that I don't have off top of head any reason to not believe the testimony. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: Okay. [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: And it would not surprise me, either, on a personal level. [LB1146]

SENATOR NELSON: All right. Thank you. [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Yes, sir. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Any other questions? Thank you, Senator Nelson. Any other questions? I thank you for your testimony. [LB1146]

SCOT ADAMS: Thank you very much. [LB1146]

SENATOR HARMS: Do we have anyone else who would like to speak in opposition of LB1146? Seeing none, do we have anyone who would like to speak in a neutral capacity of LB1146? Seeing none, then we will officially close the public hearing for LB1146. Thank you. [LB1146]