

It is our intent in bringing in the amendment that is shown in paragraph 5 to make it clear that the county boards themselves are responsible for the fiscal operation of this particular committee that is going to be deciding how to distribute the funds and our legislative intent is to hold the county boards responsible for the expenditure of those funds and to hold the county boards responsible for setting the budget, so there will be no question where the ultimate financial responsibility lies should there be misuse of funds or should there be any question as to how the funds are being spent. We think it is important to put this provision in to make it clear that the county boards are ultimately accountable and responsible for the use of these tax funds. The other, the second major amendment that is covered in two of the paragraphs requires that the county boards hold a public hearing in their particular county prior to the imposition of the lodging tax to permit anybody to come and be heard who has something to say on that particular issue before the tax is imposed. Finally the last set of amendments we are making which are contained in paragraphs 1 and in paragraphs 3 make it clear that this particular lodging tax is imposed in addition to the existing sales taxes that are imposed in that particular county, if any imposed by the county, and to make it clear that they are not intended to replace any existing sales tax. Now finally, let me just speak if I might, Mr. President, to the merits of the bill itself. I think as Senator Kahle argued earlier there is an enormous amount of potential income out there if we can work a little harder than we have been at developing tourism. We can increase substantially Nebraska's share of the gross national product if we can just divert some of that interstate traffic that goes shooting from east to west and west to east during the spring and summer months off into some of our state and county roads in Nebraska for just a day or two and the proponents of this measure have come forth with I think valid and legitimate statistics showing that by imposing a relatively small tax we can increase substantially Nebraska's share of the gross national product by bringing more tourism dollars into the state. So I would ask adoption of these amendments.

PRESIDENT: Senator Kahle, do you want to continue as one of the introducers of the amendment?

SENATOR KAHLE: Mr. Speaker, I think most of what we have been talking about has been said. I might say that by circulating the sales tax issue this morning I have got your attention. That was one of the big reasons for it.