

May 6, 1981

LB 559

CLERK: Senator Von Minden had an amendment I understand he wishes to withdraw. Mr. President, the next amendment I have is offered by Senator Vickers. Senator Vickers would move to return LB 559 to Select File for specific amendment.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Vickers.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. Chairman and members, a few days ago on 559 I offered an amendment to increase the amount of funds for the Adult Education Program in the State of Nebraska by \$10,000. This Legislature chose not to increase that fund by that amount and the arguments that I made at that time are still valid but I will make a few of them again. First of all, I think it needs to be understood that this program is one that depends on a certain amount of state funds, of state dollars, to pay for the salaries and for portions of the operations of this operation even though the majority of the funds are federal dollars that go into the program. And even though the federal dollars are increased in the budget this year that the Appropriations Committee has before us, because of the fact that the salaries have to be state dollars, and the amount of state dollars have been decreased somewhat, some of the personnel will have to be let go which, in effect, will mean that the program will not be able to administer the diplomas, the GED program that is operating right now. Now how important is that program, I guess each of us have to decide that ourselves, but as being an individual that did drop out of high school back when I was younger and maybe even more foolish than I am now, and I suppose that is debatable also, I think that from my perspective, at least, those individuals that for one reason or another do not complete their high school education in the normal course should have the opportunity and we should be cognizant of the desire of those people to complete their education and we should also provide that opportunity to do so. We should be aware of the fact that when we do help these individuals get a better education, then they, in fact, they become better able to be productive citizens of the State of Nebraska and, as such, to be taxpayers that contribute to society in a much more meaningful fashion. This, of course, returns many untold dollars to the economy of the State of Nebraska by putting these people in a position where they can contribute and not be perhaps on some of the welfare or social programs that they otherwise might be on. Also I think it needs to be pointed out that this is one of the few programs in the state, as far as educational programs, that does bring in some direct dollars, brought last year because of the numbers of diplomas that they issued and the cost they assessed for each diploma, they brought in a little over