

difference in investment return. The permanent school fund, the reason we went to this whole program, as Senator DeCamp said, is we were getting such a lousy return on our permanent school fund. We knew that, if we put it into weatherization of our public buildings, our return would be much better. So for the best interest of the taxpayers of the whole State of Nebraska we went to this program in 1981. The program has been successful. There have been 263 school districts, across the state, that have benefited. The handout I have from the energy office, the second page, will show you that there have been 550 school buildings weatherized, \$13 million have been awarded in grants, and \$38 million in local economic activity has been generated. These are jobs, these are jobs for the private sector, these are jobs for each and every one of our communities because they have helped stimulate that economic activity by bringing these projects to these school buildings. So, number one, the taxpayer benefits from the return on investment, and by the savings in energy costs. Number two, the local communities benefit from the economic activity generated by this program. Now we knew when we started there are only so many school buildings in the state. At some point we're going to weatherize them and the return on investment isn't going to be there. So we were ready to put a sunset on, to reach that point where we can evaluate when and if we should discontinue the program and there will be a point at which we will stop the program because we'll run out of school buildings to weatherize. That will happen. You can't talk about this going on and on forever because we recognize it is a finite group of people that we are dealing with. Now as soon as we feel we are running out of the cost-benefit ratio that we have now, then we are going to end it. I know Senator DeCamp and I both feel that way. But we haven't done it yet. We still have thirty some million dollars worth of projects. Even at a six-year figure we will still be short of matching all that \$33 million worth of projects. But we are only extending it three years because, again, we want to review just like this, before this body, to justify the program. We're not afraid of that justification, we're not afraid of a sunset because we think this program can justify itself. That is why we put a sunset on in the first place. We're back to you today and we're saying it does work, it's proven itself time and again, and for the best interest of this state a continuation of the program is in order. There has been so much discussion about the concept and what we are really