

County, Senator Barrett.

SENATOR BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. President, and members. Well, I am a little surprised and disappointed in Senator Johnson's position. I thought perhaps the bleeding heart had the priorities reversed. Senator Johnson, I might suggest to you that one of the reasons we are going this particular route as opposed to now the general appropriation route is specifically because of bills like LB 632. We are not going to be able to be dependent on the general fund appropriations. As I understand, the amendment, we are simply striking beginning with Section 6 which is the trust fund section of the bill which is pretty much the heart of the bill. Some have been concerned as perhaps Senator Johnson that we are creating some additional bureaucracy. This is certainly not the case. There will be oversight from the Department of Social Services as well as the Department of Health. Beyond that, this will be an ongoing program which is in place at the present time in many, many communities across this state. There are many, many volunteers involved in child advocacy programs, abuse and prevention programs. We are not, and I repeat, we are not setting up an additional bureaucracy or additional employees. Basically these people are volunteers, and the one that I am familiar with in my particular county, the center operates with a staff of one and one-half persons and over 100 volunteers donating an average of 800 to 1,000 hours per month to continue this program. They have no funding. One of the purposes of the bill is to assist in these types of programs. We need to be able to keep this effort self-sustaining and dependable, and without the trust fund, I am afraid we simply cannot do it. Also I would remind the body as I did the other day that if we eliminate the trust fund per se, we are also going to eliminate some possibilities for some federal funds, some federal matching funds which will be available providing \$1 in federal matching funds for every \$4 that the states collect and place in trust funds and/or other mechanisms. We are then jeopardizing the possible involvement of federal matching funds and I think very definitely they will be available. We are also jeopardizing as the bill calls for private endowments, gifts, and bequests. I can't imagine some individual in Omaha, some lawyer working with a person completing a will who is going to be anxious to make a grant, a bequest to the State of Nebraska general operating fund. This simply is not going to be done. So we are in