

Transit System or like the Community Action Transportation Programs throughout Nebraska, we provide them with an operating subsidy and we do that to the tune of about \$2.8 million, actually it's pretty close to \$3 million annually, some federal money, a million dollars worth of gas tax money or cash fund money and \$1.8 million in general fund money. In other words, this is a program that we already are putting user fee money into, but because the highway trust fund has been lobbied so extensively and so hard, it has been almost impossible for us to fully fund public transportation out of gas tax, out of sales tax on motor vehicles and out of license fees. Only a million dollars in public transportation money is funded from user fees. The other \$1.8 million is from general funds. I am simply suggesting through this amendment, not just suggesting, I am simply saying that the entire public transportation funding should be done on a user fee basis from the cash funds. This is a \$1.8 million change. I would offer the amendment at this time.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Warner, please, then Senator Hefner.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, as I understand the amendment, it would transfer the money from the highway cash fund which I'm of the opinion would require the statute authorization in order to effect the transfer as the current law does not permit that to be done other than in the trust fund and this is the highway cash fund that does not have that authorization. Aside from that, the program that was originally enacted for mass transit aid some years ago was a total general fund operation. It's a formula by statute that communities or those who qualify can acquire funds. Some of you may recall there was a number of hassles of some years ago on how those...what the priority would be for the utilization of less than full reimbursement. So currently, what is sometimes called the rural area, but it's not necessarily rural, it's a demand responsive type buses that are located in a number of communities around the state, are 100 percent reimbursed for those expenses. But in the case of Lincoln and Omaha, the mass transit that is in effect is prorated. Should this amendment carry, about 88 percent of the funds would be available for Lincoln and Omaha mass transit and in the event, of course, that the full reimbursement was made would be another \$2.2 million instead of \$1.8 out of the highway user revenue. I guess the basic