

out of this economic situation we are in, if we don't want to give the ability to those schools to train our people to be able to be in the job market, then don't give them the ability to do it. If you really want to recognize the results of your actions, if you want them to close the Fairbury campus, Senator Morehead, then don't give them any funds to continue to operate. They are making tough decisions. It wasn't easy for the Southeastern board to even look at a recommendation of closing a campus. It is never easy to make those kinds of decisions but they are trying to be responsible to the property taxpayers as well as the sales-income taxpayers of this state, as we are. I understand their struggle. When we get into our budgetary discussions, we are all going to understand that struggle. But I think we need to recognize that because of the severely declining tax base out there, unless we are willing to come up with additional dollars here, and I will remind you, we cut the tech schools more in the special session than we did the state colleges or the university...

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.

SENATOR VICKERS: ...if we are willing to come up with more money here, which I don't think we are, then you had better be prepared to start doing away with a lot of programs out there that I think we are going to really be needing to get us out of this economic struggle, and I will give you one brief example, one quick example. We asked the tech schools last fall to provide a counseling program for those people in agriculture who were really suffering and needed some assistance and they responded. That is what a local tech school area concept is all about but it cost them money. You don't expect to provide those services to our people for nothing. I think those services are still needed. I think they will be needed more in the future, and I think that we ought to grant them this authority recognizing that they are not going to take full advantage of it, they are not going to live hog-wild because those people that are making those decisions are property taxpayers out there as well. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: We have an amendment on the desk.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Peterson would move to amend the bill by adding a new section. (Read Peterson amendment found on page 1113 of the Legislative Journal.