

issue of the sunset date, I would argue to you that we are in the depths of an economic situation right now that this state, regardless of your philosophy, it is not ready to take over the funding of the tech schools totally from the state level. That's what the sunset provision is all about. We're not going to be ready, in my opinion, I don't see any light at the end of the tunnel yet, we're not going to be ready by 1990 either. The one part of Senator Johnson's handout that I totally agree with is the bottom paragraph on the first page. I think that the Legislature does need to carefully examine the structure of its higher education system, role and mission, the whole bit. That's my priority bill. I have suggested to the Speaker that it ought to be expedited, but the fact of the matter is regardless of what the sunset date is the Legislature, when it's ready to make its change, when it's ready to work its will can do so at any time, regardless of what sunset dates we may or may not have on the legislation like 796. Also, I want you to know that Senator Johnson is applying this across the board. The bill itself does not raise it to the Metro area, this will. I only ask you, those of you from the Metro area, to consider that if you vote for this amendment, those of us in the rural areas of the state still need the bill. So please don't vote for this amendment thinking that you're going to then have an excuse to vote against the bill simply to apply to your area. We need...

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.

SENATOR VICKERS: We need a system in our rural areas of this state to provide technical training to our people, to provide access to higher education and, yes, some of those instances are in academic training, but I will suggest to you that the access to the first two years of a community college even in the academic areas are very, very important to the people in rural Nebraska. I urge you to seriously consider the Johnson amendment, to vote the Johnson amendment down and then advance the bill in the form that it's in right now. But I understand the concerns of Senator Johnson, I want to reiterate that, of the ability of this Legislature to look at the total system of higher education, look at the way we finance education totally. I would point out to you, finally, one, very briefly, because he indicates that the percentage of increase has been .4 of a percent higher than the state colleges and about .8 of a percent...or 8 percent higher than the university, you want