

SENATOR MARSH: Senator Higgins:.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Senator Warner, you said that the purpose of this bill is to spread out the cost of something that we authorized last year and there is no way that we can delay this contract?

SENATOR WARNER: The contracts were signed, were let, you know, some months ago and constitutionally, Senator, any contract that the state has which goes beyond one year or beyond the setting of one Legislature has a provision that the contract is based upon the Legislature appropriating the funds to carry it out. To my knowledge, since we have become a state we have never renege on a contract that has been signed. As the authorization contained in last year's bill also carried the authorization for the funding for this year as well as for next year because those facilities take at least three years to complete and sometimes four...

SENATOR HIGGINS: Senator Warner, I appreciate this, but you are really on my time.

SENATOR WARNER: I'm sorry.

SENATOR HIGGINS: I just think, you say the state has never renege on a contract and yet we could postpone it until times got better. And the law itself says if we don't appropriate the money, we don't have to spend it and nobody can do anything. Kind of like Commonwealth, if the state doesn't appropriate the money, nobody can make the state do it. I am just thinking about all I have heard this year in this Legislature is what tough times we are having, how hard it is on agriculture, how we have got to tighten our belts and yet we are spending money that could be delayed. I realize this is a lot of money for Lincoln and for Omaha. And I think it is wonderful that we are going to create all this employment again that will last for a year or so for the people that do the building. But I notice that four cents of the cigarette tax is going into it. I remember when we started the cigarette tax, it was only to pay for the Bob Devaney Center. God knows how many years ago that was paid, but once you get that done, we keep the tax and we keep going, we keep going. When do we ever lower taxes? When do we ever quit the building? I just wonder, and I am looking at the Pages that go to UN-L and I have been there, and I think it is a wonderful facility, but I am just