

support a \$673,000 override to the vocational technical schools that you and I have collectively seen fit to be totally local operations. We do not appoint boards of regents for the vocational schools. No, they are locally elected. We have given the vocational technical schools their own tax base, i.e., the property tax. We have allowed the vocational technical schools the freedom to set their own tuition rates, which they do. All we have done over the years is to provide a subsidy to the vocational technical schools. But those schools are not a primary responsibility for us, as are the public schools. Elementary and secondary education is a legislative function. It turns out that we have delegated it to local schools boards, but by our Constitution it is a legislative function. Vocational technical community colleges are not a legislative function. In these difficult economic times it seems to me that if we are to sustain cuts, one of the primary places to cut would be in those areas that truly are not a primary legislative function, and the vocational technical school is one of those. Now rather than just blithely go through this list and override all the vetoes, I have been very selective of my votes and I suspect some of you have as well. But this is an area where I think selectivity says that, in the absence of any constitutional requirement that the Legislature take responsibility for vocational technical schools, that this particular veto surely ought to stand.

PRESIDENT: Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the body, I stand to ask your support in overriding the Governor's veto of the funding for the technical community colleges. We've done a lot of talk here on the floor in the last hour or so about the priorities that we have as far as the state is concerned, about the importance of education and health as it pertains to the state, of the past commitments that were made in the generations before us, and of our belief in the future. The community colleges play an important role in the future of the State of Nebraska, just as important in their own way as anything else that we are looking at here today. They provide ongoing education, as well as future employment to individuals within the State of Nebraska. Elimination of these... support to these colleges translates into nothing other than property tax increase. And that is something else that we've been spending a lot of time talking about and being concerned about. And you go back to your districts and the first thing that any one will tell you in your district is the tax, they can't support the