

subject of a lot of misinformation. Senator Wesely has agreed to divide this question. We are going to talk about his best issue first. I would really like to get in a very lively debate if we want to get the total information out here, but I understand that it is late, and I understand that we've got a lot of important things to do. I won't take the time to explore a lot of possibilities within these funds and within this department in general, but given a chance, some day when you want to, I could do that. Let's talk about the Technical Assistance Center first. I will tell you that I will oppose the funding restoration which is what we are talking about right now. It is \$60,000. As Speaker Nichol pointed out to you, it had something to do with Scottsbluff and North Platte field offices. I'll tell you what the scenario was, and it is written down in that handout for you, just a little bit. But a former Department of Economic Development Director, Don Dworak, came to our Appropriation Committee at the department's hearing last winter and suggested there was \$100,000 in their budget for field offices. Of that \$100,000 they had two field offices left, or possibly three. They originally had several. He suggested that we take that \$100,000 appropriation, leave \$40,000 there to keep the field office open at Scottsbluff, which they have done, and then take the \$60,000 and enter into a contract with the University for the Technical Assistance Center. When that hearing was over and that issue was passed by the committee and brought to the floor it was done, as we said. We had a budget crunch. We knew we were going to have a budget crunch. We came back together, if you recall, and had a very painful time for three, four weeks towards the end of session. We eliminated that \$60,000 because we said that was a new program, and we were in the midst of trying to decide what programs that we had already existing should or should not be left, which ones were least essential, which were the most, and you remember that all very well I'm sure. We said we ought not be looking at a new program when we are cutting the lifeblood off some existing tried and true programs, and we suggested that they do not operate that program, and you, as a legislative body, passed that. Lo and behold they were able to come up with the funds anyway, and they were able to operate the center, and as a matter of fact they have signed an additional contract for it, and they were able to get those funds from within their budget. So what we have said to you today, as part of our amendment, is fine, let's take those funds out of your budget. If you want to fund it you