

roads for farm to markets. We run a higher education system in this state for our children, for the children of the middle class. We operate banking departments, insurance departments. We operate a military department. We have a state government that advocates for majoritarian middle class values. I would suggest to you that the advocacy agencies that we have here, these commissions, are a very valuable counterweight because I don't think state government will have the sufficient sensitivity nor the sufficient understanding of the perceptual problems and particular needs of these constituencies to really respond to the human needs in Native American communities, in Mexican-American communities or generally look at problems from the perspective of women. For that reason I think that we have to balance our existing advocacy agencies which we simply really are...we should really admit is state government with the counterweights, with the checks on our reality of these commissions. They do good work. They have already suffered very great budget cuts. At this point, at this late in the season to cut this amount of money really cuts into their ability to do any effective work. Allow the commissions to thrive, allow at least them to continue for this year and to come back to us with the amount of work that they are able to do with the progress that they are able to make, with the budgets that we made in our regular session, which I remind you, were significantly curtailed at that time. So, with that, I hope that you will join me in voting for this amendment and striking from the Budget Committee's recommendations the \$66,000 of cuts for the advocacy commissions.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Schmit, please.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, I rise in support of the amendment. I rise as a member, I believe, of a very new and rapidly expanding minority and that is the minority which has been created as a result of the new poverty in agriculture. As a 57 year old farmer I visit regularly with many members of my community, my district in the State of Nebraska who suddenly and very bewilderedly find themselves in a situation they never expected to present itself, that of having lost the bulk if not all of their resources, that of having found themselves in a position of not being trained for any skill, that of being in a position agewise where you're not readily "hirable", that in the position of being located in an area where there are very few jobs. All of a sudden an individual who historically and traditionally has been able to support themselves and their families and all of a sudden find themselves not being able to