

are important to kids and we never know when they're going to really trigger their interest and really trigger their initiative and motivate them to do something just as the experiences that we've had. We can talk about what's three days or four days, but what has Boys State or Girls State done for many kids over the years? Perhaps that week has been their most important week in their life and it has challenged them to do things that they had never done before. I can see this program, perhaps it's not on that same level, I'm sure it isn't, but is an opportunity for these kids at risk to have it, to get out and do something that there is no program right now that I know of that they can participate in. So I do support Senator Chambers' amendment at 30,000, feeling that that's a probably more appropriate approach than Senator Hefner's 15, and I will be supporting the bill on that basis.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. Senator Schimek, you're next on the Chambers amendment.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, Mr. President, members of the body, I will try to be brief because this issue has been on our desk before. I'm rising to support at least somewhere above the \$15,000 level. I don't know if it needs to be \$30,000, Senator Chambers, or what, but I do concur with Senator Wehrbein that 15,000 does seem pretty sparse and it is important that we do furnish the transportation for these students. I think that's a critical component of it. I like the idea that Senator Chambers mentioned about maybe having them on the university campus. I think one year they could be on the Kearney campus, maybe one year on the Chadron campus, depending on what that would mean in terms of cost, but I think the opportunity for these students to experience life on the campus is an important effort in itself and can have a very positive influence on these students. I guess I would just say to you that why don't we just give this program a chance. We all acknowledge what Senator Nelson has brought to us, that the program was perhaps, not perhaps, that the program spent way too much money in its inception. I go back to my remarks earlier and say part of that was our fault, I'm sorry. We allotted that money to them, they spent it, not even all of it, they spent it. We should have perhaps had more oversight over the program in the first place. That's not to say that they don't bear some of the responsibility as well, the staff who put that together, but I would just plead with you to let this program go for another couple of years, and then after it has had four years, then maybe we can take a look at it.