

Witness/Victim Fund. That fund was previously at 100,000 dollars. The Governor, I believe, suggested a one percent cut in those funds. Brought it down to 99. There has been a reduction to 56,000. Senator Moore I'm sure will comment, but this restores the funding that was previously there. I just want to say that we have spent on this floor tens of millions of dollars for the prosecution, pursuit, et cetera, of the individuals who commit the crimes in this state. We've added 3 million dollars, approximately, to the proposed 25 million dollar new facility for housing inmates, but the forgotten individual on this floor year, after year, after year is the victim of the crime. We created the Victim's Reparations Fund. We have had a number of other funds, but, time after time, the victims of crimes are the forgotten people. Unfortunately, my experience in the last two years has not reaffirmed my conviction that the victims of crime are being given a fair shake in this state today. We've put such a minuscule amount of money into those programs that many of them continue to suffer long after they have been victimized, and I would turn the rest of my time over to Senator Lindsay, if he wishes to use it, or, if Senator Pirsch is here, she could use it also. But I would ask for the support of the amendment. I know it's late and I'll not take a lot of time.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Lindsay.

SENATOR LINDSAY: Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator Schmit. Members, I do rise in support of the Schmit amendment. I think what we were looking at is I think budgeted at 100,000 last year and reduced down to 53,000 this year by...or 55,000 this year by the committee. The Governor's recommendation would have applied the one percent cut to that program. We're not...it's not a huge amount that's funded to this program, but they do quite a bit with it. It's a very good use of funds. It does help quite a few people who are victims of crime. I do think it's an appropriate use of the money. The amount that was cut from the budget, while it doesn't appear to be a large amount, it's an enormous amount when compared to the total budget or total funding for that program. I think Senator Schmit has talked about the merits of the program. I think it's a good use of the money. I will be voting in favor of the amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Lindsay. Senator Moore.