

funds, this year, of about 3 percent. So actually there's been an increase in mental health funding to all regions. And, yes, there is a problem in mental health there is a problem, granted. But if Senator Crosby's amendment is carried over to the other regions, which obviously it arguably should be, it rose from a \$147,000 amendment to about a \$550,000 amendment. So that's one of those things that we can do, treat one region differently, they all can come in with the same argument they need some greater continuation funding, so, the precedent there. There is a problem in Region V. There is also a problem in other regions that we have to be cognizant of when you talk about Senator Crosby's portion of the amendment. Once again, it's not like the state has cut back services there. Obviously the situation exists that that is an ever increasing dollar item for the state and local governments as a whole. The state has not been cutting back funds. There is an increased demand. The question is, do we want to appropriate money to try and keep up with that increased demand? Thus far we've treated everyone the same. And if you vote for Region V, there's a good argument you have to do the same for the others. So the precedent is there, it's not \$147,000 issue, it's probably more like a half a million dollar issue. Also, Senator Robak's issue in Region IV, emergency protective services, that is an issue that plagues many of the regions in the State of Nebraska. Senator Robak is probably incorrect in saying it's the only region that has a problem. Region III has a problem very similar to Region IV. Obviously, all the four, shall we say, smaller in population regions are all treated the same and appropriated \$200,000 to deal with this. Some are using that, all of it, some are using more than that and have tried to work some arrangements among themselves. But once again, if you treat Region IV separately, there is going to be a good argument you'll have to treat the other three regions in a different manner as well. This whole issue of the EPS is something that we need to look at. Arguably, next year we are going to have to appropriate some money to deal with those. I think there is a variety of plans being...and Senator Wesely can probably address this as good as anybody. There's probably some plans being drafted up on how we're going to move forward on this, on the protective services. I think that's a year from now...we know the bill is going to come due. I think it's probably wise to wait and do...we'll look at this, I hate to say we need to study, that's one of those things, we need to look at all the regions, see their needs, come up with a dollar amount to treat them all the same. Then a year from now we're probably going to have to appropriate