

Medical Center there right now. There is...we do contracts with private institutions or private entities all the time, especially in the area of health care. I think we just need to look at...probably just look at the Department of Health budget, and look at what some of the grants and contracts and other fundings that we are doing to see numerous examples of it. So I don't think we are breaking new ground by doing what this bill envisions. I think Senator Day very eloquently mentioned the importance of why it is important to have research centers in the State of Nebraska, and that is, as I mentioned, that Nebraska's bone marrow transplant center at the University of Nebraska Medical Center is world renowned, is internationally known. People come from all over to get treatment there. Nebraskans stay in Nebraska to get treatment, they stay close to home to get treatment because we have such a good program. And that is important that that expertise be developed through research. It is important that additional treatments be discovered. It is important that different prevention techniques and prevention methods be important or being discovered. It is important that methods of avoiding additional health care costs by additional testing be discovered, and that is one of the recent discoveries here in Nebraska. I simply believe that research is absolutely imperative, especially in conjunction with a disease like cancer that affects, confronts so many people. I would urge the advancement of the bill.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Lindsay. Senator Will.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I rise in support of LB 595. As I stated on the previous bill, LB 22, I am not a big fan of excise taxes in general, and the tobacco tax, in particular, as a general revenue source because they do tend to be regressive in nature. However, if an increase in the cigarette tax is desirable or inevitable, as it appears it may be, this year, I think the one thing that can swing me over, that can make it palatable to me is devoting a portion of that to cancer research. Because, clearly, there has been a link established between the use of this product and the development of cancer, and I think that the more state dollars that we can devote through the cost of this product to both of our fine research institutions here in Nebraska, the better off we will be, in the long run, as progress is made in the research on this disease. So I would hope that you would see fit to join me in voting to advance LB 595 along with LB 22, which has already been advanced, to make sure that we dedicate a portion