

NORFOLK GROUP

NEBRASKA ENERGY OFFICE FOCUS GROUP  
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MODERATOR COMMENTS

(Name) and I'm in my second year on the school board in (town) and I'm secretary for the board.

(Name), I'm the principal at (town) Schools, I've been there three years.

(Name), principal at (town) Public Schools.

(M) Let me also ask, I forgot to ask this, would you tell me if you have, to your knowledge, some of you may or may not be sure, have you participated in the Nebraska School Loan Program in your school district. (name), to your knowledge..? And sometimes these go back six, eight years ago, so you can say I'm not sure.

I'm not sure.

Not to my knowledge, no.

Our school has but it was before my time.

(name), I'm maintenance and grounds at (town) Public Schools and I have no knowledge of the program.

(Name), superintendent of schools at (town), and are you talking about a loan program or participation in the grant program?

(M) Tonight we're going to be talking about the school loan program.

We have not participated in the loan program.

(M) O.K. But you've participated in the grant program which preceded that?

Yes.

(name), (town) Public Schools, I'm the board president. Not to my knowledge....

(Name), I'm superintendent of schools at (town), we participated in both the grant and loan programs.

(Name), (town) Public Schools, I'm the maintenance engineer. We haven't to my knowledge.

(Name), principal at (town), and during the time I've been at (town), we have not participated in the loan program.

I'm (name) of (town), Nebraska, custodian, groundskeeper and I know nothing of your program.

My name is (Name), I'm with the (town) Public Schools System, I've been on the board for 12 years and we have participated in the loan program. I'm president of the board currently.

(Name), I'm superintendent at (town), we have not.

I'm (Name), I'm supervisor of maintenance and grounds in (town), that's why I'm the last one here. We have participated in the grant program but so far as I know, we haven't in the loan program.

(M) So we've got about 50-50, half of you have participated in either the grant program or the loan program and the rest of you have not or have little awareness. Those of you that have participated in let's say the Nebraska School Loan Program, what comes to mind first? What do you think of first?

Paperwork.

Paperwork and time.

(M) Anything else? What do you mean in terms of time? Can you tell me a little more?

The time it took to get the paperwork completed, I mean signed and back, redone, signed and back, takes a long time to get that.

I would think one of the big things would be interest. Cost of the loan.

(M) Cost of the loan, o.k.

There is no interest.

There is no interest, zero percent.

Still be the first question you're going to ask.

(M) Yeah, when you hear the term "loan," that would be a valid question probably, yeah. I'm going to read an aided description of the program because I wanted to get your top-of-mind reaction, those of you that are aware of it. You may or may not be aware that you can get grants or loans, actually, now we're talking about loans, from the Nebraska Energy Office to pay for a school building energy analysis or audit or to finance the purchasing of more energy efficient heating and cooling equipment for your school. Now as far as the analysis, it is grants or loans. Would you be interested in learning more about this program?

Pardon me, what was the question?

(M) Would you be interested in learning more about this program? And I'll read it again. (repeats) Four of you are shaking your heads.

(M) Why?

Well, I especially I suppose the grant aspect of it, if there's some money out there that could be used for making your operation more efficient, saving some money, I suppose anybody would be interested.

(M) How many of you were aware that there is a grant or loan program for energy analysis? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 out of the.... o.k.

There is still a grant program?

For analysis

(M) For analysis.

For analysis then.

(M) Yeah, we're talking about an energy analysis right now. The way this works is that what was formerly a grant program is now a no-interest loan program, a revolving fund that is used for building improvements, but for an energy analysis, you can get up to \$2,500 to do an energy analysis to audit your program. So about 5, 6 of you were aware of it, but most of you that raised your hands were people who've been involved in the grant program or previous program and I went through it. Those of you that indicated earlier you are not aware, were not on that.

Gary, let me ask a question, if you were involved in this energy audit back a number of years ago, would you still be eligible for a grant or a loan to do again?

(M) Yes.

By a number of years, maybe 10 years ago.

(M) Yeah, it's my understanding you know, there may be some other clarifications as far as additional facilities, but the energy analysis program people are eligible for under the grant.

The previous time the grant indicated that we were probably not eligible for any significant money because there wasn't any significant savings in energy available now.

(M) That's part of the evaluation process, is what the potential savings would be.

Most of us that went through the original grant program, I think did it quite comprehensively and so we are well aware of what the areas are, where energy savings would take place and I don't think that would change in time, especially if it's physical type.

(M) Do you feel like you've done everything you could already do?

No, there's a lot of things we could do but we know what those things are without an analysis.

It seems to me we had to have another analysis, I can't remember why, but I...

Is that a requirement of the loan program?

We had to have another analysis....

This is one of the reasons we rejected the idea of the loan program, was because of the paperwork, another analysis, it's all there in black and white, it was done quite comprehensively, so it was redundant.

But if they give you a grant, why didn't you go ahead and do it?

No, I'm talking about to get in the loan, we would have had to do another analysis.

I know, but if they give you the money to do the analysis, why didn't you go ahead and do it?

That's a waste of somebody's money.

(M) So at that point, the reason you didn't go ahead, even though it was a grant, was you didn't feel it was really worthwhile?

It wasn't what....

We did the asbestos about 3 years ago too and now we get to do it again.

I agree with him, we've been caught in that trap, we abated our asbestos, and now we've got to do it again. We did our energy audit, and now we'd have to do it again.

(M) Well, the purpose of the analysis is to compute the savings so that if you want to go ahead with, and for those of you who have not been closely involved in this, and those of you that have maybe can explain it better than I, but the analysis part is done to project what the savings would be if you made improvements according to the analysis and based upon those savings then, the determination is made of qualification for the loan and....

Why all the hurdles, why all the hurdles in this program? Why all the catch 22 things? Can't this be simplified like some government programs have?

(M) What would you suggest, I'm not being defensive one way or the other, I'm trying to think of what are some of the main hurdles that you see, or how would you like to see it?

Well, the paperwork, the idea of the analysis and the follow-up analysis and so on.

If you go back to when you had the grants, did you have a payback period?

Sure.

In other words, if you did this, it would pay you back in so many years it would pay back the amount of money \_\_\_\_\_ (?)

There was a theoretical, I won't say theoretical, there was a payback period there, the savings you're talking about?

See, I wasn't familiar with the grants, I don't know, but on the....

I think we were cited by the State Energy Office as being one of the schools that saved upwards of 40% on the whole building, energy wise over a period of time. It's valuable, my point was, why can't it be simplified?

Well, I was thinking that was one reason why they might have the analysis again, to find out what the payback period is to establish the loan amount.

We've done that. We knew what our payback was every year, in fact, last year, we're still filling out forms \_\_\_\_\_.

Let's take an example of one of the things that you've got, what is one of the projects that you've got left to do yet?

Windows, I suppose.

What's the payback period?

I don't have the figures with me right now. There is a savings period.

In other words, in so many that's how they establish how much you pay off each year, is by what the payback is and I suppose the .....

How much you pay off what?

The windows, if you put the windows in.

(M) How much the savings would be on that.

That's right, what you save in energy is supposed to pay for the windows.

If something would save you say 50% of a large amount, I know that's too large, but how would that effect what you pay back?

If you got \$5,000 a month heating bill, for example, and if you put in windows and it saves you \$2,000 and the windows cost you \$100,000, how much will the \$2,000 pay for each year and how long will it take to get it paid for, see? That's what the payback period establishes.

(M) And all of these currently, they're revolving fund monies that are used over and over so the payback that you pay back, then that money can be loaned again to another school district to be used again, but to know how long a period of time you have those funds and what your rate of payback would be, the analysis determines that, if it's projected that it has a breakeven payback of 7 years, then the time frame, I think right now it's a 14 year, it's a 50% payback, so if it's paid off in 7 years, then you pay it off in 14.

If I could apply for a grant on windows and add up their \_\_\_\_\_, they'd come out and kind of look over and deal with us, and they wouldn't go along with it. They said we could do a lot of that ourselves, especially the heating.

(M) So you had a situation, (name), where you applied but didn't get the funds because the savings didn't work out.

I looked at that but they didn't figure, our windows were pretty good, it wouldn't save that much, it wouldn't give us anything back.

(M) Let me ask, some of you have been through the program, how many of you have done an energy analysis in your school district within the last 3 years? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

I don't know, I mean (town) has practically put all new windows in all their buildings but I'm just the custodian and I don't know anything about it so, I'm sure they probably have, because we have new windows on every side but one now in our old buildings.

I was hoping the subject of window replacement would come up because it's been a sore spot with me since I've been in the system in (town), we can get \$60,000 for a computer management system to put in a building that is leaking air continually whether it's winter or summer because of the bad windows. They will put that money out and say, as long as an engineer puts on paper it's going to pay back in 4 to 5 years, give them that grant, put in that computer management system into a building that

has so much heat loss. Now they turned right around and say, we will not give you a grant to replace windows because it won't show a payback in 4 to 5 years. Now this is information I've got via the grapevine, I haven't been in on the works of it, but this was my understanding and I can't see why they don't start at the crux of the whole thing, stop your air infiltration or your heat loss and your heat gain and your heat loss and then work on your controls of your equipment. It's just backwards as far as I'm concerned.

(M) So you're seeing places where there could be savings but there's nothing being done about it at this point.

Definitely. Some engineer can put on paper, this equipment is going to save you x-many dollars a year and pay for itself in less than 5 years, why can't they show that when you've got windows that leak so badly, you've got increased custodial work because of the dust, you've got uncomfortable people, we've got growly teachers, we've got...it's just one big headache and one constant energy problem.

What you're saying, (name), is precisely what's wrong with the system. Some do and some don't and that's what's wrong with the whole program. Some schools out here might apply for a loan, year's ago they might have applied for a grant, somebody else might not, somebody's building is leaking air, somebody's isn't, there's absolutely no comprehensive requirement. Don't please misunderstand me, I'm not asking for more bureaucracy and more rules, regs and requirements, but that's precisely why I don't like the whole program anymore. The loan program either.

You look in the book of the Nebraska Energy audit, the committee, and it says, reduce your window exposure, your glass exposure 50%, my gosh, that's quite a savings right there. Cut your glass down to half, besides all the infiltration and go to double glazing and cut that heat loss and gain...

I think the state ought to hold off giving anybody the money for about three years and use the money to make sure everybody's got an audit, even if they have to pay for it. And they should have the same people doing the school audits so that we're not comparing apples and oranges. You get a good engineer in (town) who'll write you a program and he says it's going to pay it back in six years, might take 60, but they've already got the money, and they've spent it, you get somebody else to say it's going to take 20 years and he gets turned down by a different energy \_\_\_\_\_ program. You see what I'm saying?

What you're saying is our engineering isn't as good as it should be.

Well, it differs. Some are smarter than others, that's for sure.



I would have a tendency to agree with (name), in the experience that I've had with the payback is that the engineering firms, I tell you, I think they got somebody that sits in an office and they go through a formality and that's all you get. You don't get anybody coming out and inspecting your particular area because we put windows in our building, one building, and he didn't even have the windows counted.

(M) So what you're saying, (Name), in terms of the analysis part here, you've perceived some inconsistencies from one firm to the other that does the payback analysis. One of the things is that there have been some schools that have been very active in the program, others have not applied at all.

Whenever you deal with grants or loans, you know that and everybody sitting here knows that, some people are more articulate than others, some write better programs, some write better proposals than others, and so the people that read those proposals are going to go with the well-written ones, maybe not the well-deserving ones but the well-written ones, the ones that show a payback \_\_\_\_\_.

I haven't noticed the problem, at least we haven't noticed the problem and I don't know whether it is really a problem, but with that loan program, up until last January, they were approving all of them. Weren't they?

The trouble with the loan program though, Bill, is the people that can afford to borrow the money can afford to do the work usually.

(M) (Name), your school district's not been involved in the program, correct?

We have before I got there.

(M) O.K. Based upon, I'm hearing quite a bit from those of you that have been involved in the program. I'd like to pursue a little bit a few of you that have not applied yet and to get your perspective on why you may have decided not to apply or have you even considered applying, I guess is what I'm asking.

Well, we have some items we have applied, for example, fans in the gym. That has not been proven to be conserving energy, has it? That's what I'm saying, things like that, lighting in gyms. We've looked at that also. Now, some lighting is o.k.'d and some is not, to my knowledge.

Not very much of it.

There is some that's been o.k.'d I know. I don't know if that's been way back when, or you know, but I guess in my end, I have not made any applications for this in that capacity. I don't do the specifics like you're saying.

(M) (Name), you've applied and....

Yeah, we had the TA three years ago with the intention of either getting, but they changed to the loan program after that. Then I even, I'm trying to think when I went to the meeting that discussed this whole thing, it wasn't Holiday Inn, what's that called, Country Inn, Crossroads? Was anybody there at that one. (Name), were you there at the last, year ago, maybe, something like that. They explained this whole thing and then we got the paperwork and I guess I looked at the paperwork and I looked at their payback and they told us at that meeting, I think, if I recall, that they're not going to loan money on anything that doesn't have a payback of what, less than 5 years? Did you hear that, (Name)? That's where the emphasis is going to be, I'm just sure that's what we were told. And I looked at our situation and a lot of ours are like 7 to 10. We might have had one or two items, one being to automatic temperature control on the radiators, I think that was a lower, fewer number of years. Anyway, by the time you looked at that and then the other part of it was the, as I recall, I believe you had to have it all written by an engineer or somebody, now you can turn around and get that reimbursed I guess, or whatever, but I don't know, I guess we thought by the time it was all said and done and you put in 30 man hours or 40 or whatever, to get it done, at \$25 an hour or \$50 an hour....

I would say this though about it, on the positive side, that when we went through the analysis and we put in worked over our air exchangers, and weather stripping, stack dampers, insulation, night setbacks, that was all approved. Since then, we've done as many projects on our own because even though we didn't have the payback period, it did open our eyes to what could happen and we did, on our own, we put in gym lighting, we put in gym fans, we did close up some windows, the exposure of the windows and closed up some windows, you know, because we knew, had been exposed to the audit or could have been.

(M) Have you felt that the audits you've gotten have been worthwhile or useful information once you've gotten them.

I think they point out things to you that the average layman is not familiar with. You look at a building and an engineer can come in here and say, these shouldn't have been built this way, but you walk in and out of everyday for 20, you don't notice it. Yeah, I think it is valuable.

(M) When the results of the audit come back, have they been in a format you could understand? Is there anything you'd suggest in terms of formatting the audits? The engineering firms are doing or .....?

No, the audit's have been fine. The big difference on the engineering, sure, a big difference. The two that we've used, one was very complete, very easy to read and the second one was where we had trouble with time because it came back incomplete and then you had to go back and do some more and do some more and that was the engineer's fault, actually, it was an architect. But on the positive side of that too, is the loan program, tends more to be something that if you get into a bind with the large expenditures, thinning you out how it is in an emergency situation and I think that's where you find it being used more rather than the grants. You can do all the TA's you want and you still have to pay that money back eventually, so consequently, you're a little more hesitant about doing these things, where with the grant, you went ahead and did it, but with the loan program, you say, well, maybe we can get by without it, so you don't do the work. The emergency things you do, yeah, and it works well for that. The little things you do, but the in-between, halfway big things, you won't do because you know you're going to have to pay that money back.

Well, that's why we've rejected the loan program. We just said if it was going to cost us \$50,000 over a 10 year period, let's spend \$5,000 a year to do it and not have to do any paperwork or pay any money back.

(M) As you present these programs to your boards and you talk about them in terms of the school loan program, you've told me that the middle-sized projects are the ones that are the most difficult in your own mind to justify, are there any other, and some of you are here tonight representing boards, too, what do you find by the program that makes it difficult sometimes to sell, if you will, to a board member? Or those of you that are board members, if you.....

Well, I can't speak for the board members here but I know that it's been my experience, I think with my neighbors too, some of them, that when you get in to something that's really going to cost you a lot of money, we're probably talking buildings that were built in the '10's and the '20's, anywhere from 1900 to 1920, and what you can't sell, is hey, \$20,000 here, \$50,000 here, we're running good money after bad because this building probably should be replaced.

(M) Any of you on the boards that, based now on what you've heard about the program, what questions would you have about it?

I think it's true that 50% has picked up right away and the other 50% carried over a period of years. 50% is what hurts. I think the program, in my estimation, to our board would have been easier to sell if we wouldn't have had to pay the 50%. That initial cost is what ...

We put in windows, we put in gym lighting, we put in weather stripping, and a lot of things that were on this analysis, we did

ourselves, but the windows were \$110,000 and that depleted a good portion of our building fund to get them replaced.

You did this on your own, the windows?

No, we got a loan for this, we got a loan for the windows.

Well this paragraph that Gary read said something about heating and cooling equipment.

(M) That was for the analysis, what I read was that you may or may not be aware you can get grants or loans from the energy office to pay for a school building energy analysis or audit, that's what I was talking about in that part. Now, I think I mentioned this, but I want to double-check here too, are you aware that you can get up to \$2,500 per building, that that money is available from the state energy office to pay for an energy audit? How many of you were aware of that program? 1, 2, 3, 4. The same four people that have been, so there's quite a few of you where this is really a fairly, because some of these programs were really applied for and used 5, 6 years ago and some of these are newer programs that are being developed now, the loan program in particular is the newer program. Knowing that, would you be interested in applying for this type of ....

How much does an energy analysis cost?

Good question. I was just going to mention that, that I really don't know how they figure that it would cost \$2,500 per building because depending on the size of the building, some of them don't do an awful lot of work for their \$2,500 and they still charge you that.

Or if you have a situation where you're elementary and secondary are in a building.

We got ours done, we got two buildings done for the same amount of money. I suppose he could have charged about \$2,500 for each one.

(M) It can run over \$2,500 and then the difference you would pay, but that amount is kind of what's been budgeted or allocated for. Now you can also have on the loan program, you can do your own analysis if you have a registered engineer that is registered. So you do not have to, under the grant program, you had to go out and hire a consulting firm, but under the loan program, it's a little bit more flexible, that a registered engineer can conduct your own analysis too if you have someone on staff. How many of you were aware of that? 1 or 2. O.K.

Let's go back, you were talking about formatting originally, when you submit applications for example, for the lighting, for the fans, like we've talked about, have you more or less just gotten

together and decided what would be approved, what would not be approved on a general basis or.....

(M) I want to make clear, I'm not with the energy office. (I understand) I'm with the consulting firm, the research company, and so some of these, I can check and get back with you, but I am not involved in setting the criteria for what gets approved or not approved so you may ask me a question I can't answer.

I have a question now since you're doing the research on this, how many schools actually borrowed the money when they didn't have to just so they could put the money out on interest and collect interest off it and pay it back. Which to me, I don't know, kind of leans towards fraud, but.....

I don't understand.

Well, if you can get the \$2,500 for the TA, like in your case for \$110,000, you surely went out and asked for the loan for \$110,000 rather than borrow the money from the local bank.

Oh you have to have a bill first.

True, I know, but see, if you're going to do this, all right, if you had enough money, now \$110,000 is too much, but if you had like a small project and \$20,000 for example, you could probably put that in the general budget rather than borrow the money. That's my question, how many of them are actually going out and borrowing the money rather than doing it themselves.

We did.

But you had \$110,000.

What he's saying (Name), is there are some schools that have got a \$2 million budget, a \$1 million cash reserve and they're borrowing money to do energy grants where schools like you and I that got a \$2 million budget and only \$100,000 cash reserve. That's what he's saying.

Yeah, but the fact is, that if they've got this much in reserve, that money is sitting on interest and this loan isn't costing anything.

(M) But I'm sensing you see some inequality, I mean, what you're basically saying is that if they've got that money, they can use it somewhere else, either to generate interest or ....

It isn't like borrowing from your banker, you don't have to show what you've got before you get the money.

You gotta have a bill.

(M) Let's look at it another way. If it were not considered a loan, because I think a loan has connotations of interest and payback and a lot of things there that and these questions you're raising are basically you're saying you're loaning the money, interest free, or you're not having to pay the interest, you're just paying back the principle over a defined period of time. Another way to look at this is that's it's really a shared savings program in the sense that you are saving money when you make these improvements, that savings is benefitting you in the long run, but it's also benefitting the energy usage of everyone, that there's a shared value to this, there's a value to you in terms of the savings you make over time, there's a value in terms of saving energy to the whole community. What is your reaction if this were talked about in terms of a shared savings program where you would compute the payback, except in payback, we'd be looking at savings, you'd compute the savings, and how long those savings would have to be incurred before the loan could be paid off, so let's say that the saving shows that if you're going to make a \$30,000 improvement in your school, in a period of 7 years, you will have saved \$30,000. Now it'd be a shared savings program in the sense that the payback on it wouldn't be 7 years, but it'd be 14 years so you could get a \$30,000 improvement and then you and the energy office would share in the savings and then it would be 14 years to pay it back. You'd be paying back 7 years of the savings, the energy office would be paying for 7 years of the savings. Does that have a different kind of connotation to you?

I'm not sure I understand it.

Just change the name.

(M) Exactly. That's the way the program works now but it would be marketed or explained in terms of a savings system rather than as a loan, that's what I'm asking.

You ever thought about a forgiveness program? No, I mean, you loan somebody so much money for a project, and if the savings are proven, you forgive certain dollar amounts for dollars saved and they have to pay back to you.

Proving that savings might be a little tough unless you got down to measuring degree days and so on.

Well, if you can't prove the savings, then they shouldn't be in the business.

How many of us have the technical expertise to measure degree days and the heating program and...

That's not hard to do. Your gas company, you're served by Kansas-Nebraska aren't you, they'll do that.

Can you imagine how crooked that could be?

They're looking for a perfect set-up and they're not going to get it.

Well, I know that, so therefore, if you're going to be crooked, and it's a loan, you're going to have to pay it back so you're only going to be cheating yourself. And after all, whose money are we spending? We're not spending somebody else's money, we're spending our money.

(M) The whole goal of this is to give an incentive to save energy, that's why the monies are there from federal government, or state or whatever funding source it is. Now these funds come from taxes on gas and oil that are pumped in the state. They're not general fund monies, whether you call it the school loan program or the shared savings program, it comes from a surcharge or surtax on gas and oil that's pumped in the state so it's a revenue based kind of system rather than a general fund base system.

To go back to your original statement about wanting to change the name, I think maybe in my mind, it might help, to answer your question, if you're asking the question about that, because when you work in the school business, anytime you talk about borrowing money in the school, there usually is a negative sense, no matter where you're talking about borrowing it from, whether it's zero interest or what so you're still talking about borrowing money so maybe if you change the name, it might help.

(M) (Name), you're on the school board, if they came to you and said well, there's a school loan program or there's a shared savings program, what would you be, do you have any reaction one way or the other?

Shared savings sounds better.

(M) A little bit more open-mindedness to think about it. Who else do we have from a board here tonight, Dennis, you're

I believe the public would take that better. Like you said, you are borrowing but then your...it's just a different meaning to it.

(M) And that's something that you have to consider is your public too when you're taking this out and communicating.

I don't think you have any trouble selling the loan program either, do you (Name), I mean I really think that semantics don't make any difference, I really think boards are quite receptive, if you go to them and you can show them on black and white how much money you're going to save over a period of time, I don't think the taxpayer or anybody's objected to the loan if it's no interest, I mean from that standpoint.

For those of us who have done it, it was easy.

Sure I think boards would be quite receptive.

I want to ask you a question, up there in (town) they built a new gym in 1970, it's all metal, it's 18 years old, and will last probably 5, 6 years, 7, 8 maybe, I've been to the board meetings and we seem to have a problem with a condensation, they insulated at that time with a 3 inch blanket, when it gets really cold outside, you get a lot of people in there, you get condensation, you get a drip. They still haven't done anything.

You do anything you could do to save energy.

Still there is a drip...

Where's it coming from, the roof? From the roof area?

Yeah. I'd say that it was adequate at the time but I don't think it's adequate now.

Just dripped off the insulation?

Yeah. Doesn't have no windows in it at all does it, (Name), and I'd say we're still losing the heat.

Well, in our energy analysis, we had, it was kind of concluded that we had a leak in our elementary which is about a 20 - 25 year old building, and at that time, they weren't putting much insulation in the roofs, they had about 3 inches of insulation and that's about it and then they had a false ceiling, and all the heating ducts and everything were between the ceiling and the roof and they did recommend that we would put on a new roof with insulation, added insulation, but the cost and the amount of payback period wasn't really conducive and we didn't feel like we wanted to do that at that time. Then of course when we looked at the gas company analysis, you know the gas company occasionally comes around and takes pictures of the city and analyzes how much heat loss you got through your roof, that didn't show up very bad. But I would say, yes, you probably could get a loan on a new roof, a membrane roof with insulation between it. Would that help? Is that what you're thinking is causing the problem?

Well, it's got steel beams running and they run this way and you got beams every 25 feet \_\_\_\_\_.

(M) Those types of things I'm not qualified to answer. I think you'd have to do an analysis to find out.

It gets condensation, you get a lot of people in there, you get it.



But what he's speaking to, I think, (Name), and what Gary was speaking to awhile ago is involved with the whole state program, there's no accountability, in other words, here you have one school that's paying a \$10,000 a month electrical bill and on the same size building, you're paying \$3,000 a month, what's the state say about that? What about that energy you're losing and you're paying a lot of money for? Who's saying anything about that?

(M) And your point is, if there were analyses done to analyze all these situations, then the priority ...

Have everybody do an analysis, take the money, make everybody do one.

(M) Then you could set priorities according to where the need is, not just who's applying.

And it would be nice.

If you have 45% dropout rates in your schools, the state steps in and does something about it, why not if you have 45% energy drop out.

That's what my original question about the priorities, how they're set and where can you see these? I don't care what you're talking about but there has to be some set priorities for what is allowable and what is not.

All the screaming if we heard everybody has to do an energy audit...

Oh yeah.

Do they have money available for every school to do an analysis?

(M) Well, at the present time with the loan program, under the grant program, I think it was more competitive, under the loan program, there've been very few that have been turned down recently so there are funds under the loan program that are not being utilized and that's one of the reasons why we're here tonight is to kind of get your feedback, why aren't these funds being utilized as much as maybe we'd like to see them utilized. Now how much there is I can't answer but the history of this has been that there have been funds available when people have applied for them. I think those of you that have applied would know that. You mentioned accountability and I've got a couple more questions here, I want to move on to another subject. One, two, or three years after actual improvements have been made, schools receive a score card identifying dollar and energy savings resulting from their building improvements. Were you aware of this ongoing energy score card information? Those of you that have been involved in the program?

(Name) is nodding, (name), (name), (name). When you've received these score cards, have you shared the information with other people in your school system?

I missed your question, I'm sorry.

(M) (repeats question) This is when you're filling out the reports on your consumption.

We put it in the paper.

How are the numbers on the score card calculated?

(M) Those of you that have been involved in it, maybe you can...

Do they represent what you can go out and like Neil said a moment ago, measure them, or are they just guesstimates produced by taking numbers off your application?

They make you fill out from July through July, your gas bills, electric bills, your wat hours and your cubic feet and you get the degree days and everything and you send that to them and they've got a computer I guess down there that they put it in and compare it with your engineering original application, and they come out and say that here's how much gas you used before you did this, and how much you used now, and this is what it cost, and this is what you saved.

(M) And then you can use that to share, it's a way of evaluating too, how the program is going and you can use it to share with the community and the board, what your return on investment has been if you will. When you submit your energy consumption information to calculate the score card, this again will apply to the 5 or 6 of you that have been doing this, do you view submitting the information as a help or a hindrance?

It's about a 30 minute hindrance, but it's worth it though.

Actually, it's a help, because we've had some raises in electrical rates and some things like that, you kind of catch when you're going through that every year and it makes you stop and think about what's going on.

It doesn't bother a board member but it may bother a superintendent.

We found a \$2,000 error in the city's billing to us, they overbilled us, there was a mistake made on the kilowat hours that got overlooked in the dead of winter when we thought we really had a bad bill and we questioned them and they went back and said, hey, we made a mistake. The factors they multiplied...

(M) So doing the paperwork did end up in some positive side things there too. \_\_\_\_\_(?)

We found out the other way, our meter had quit.

(M) Under the new, if we called this an energy savings program, then this score card information would be used to compute your share of energy savings. That would basically be, if the terminology were changed from a loan program to an energy savings program, you'd still be submitting your utilization data and then it would become what the savings have been. How do you react to that idea?

Is the purpose of your research to try to get people to use the loan program more?

(M) I think there are multiple purposes. One is to find out people's awareness of the program first and then secondly ....

'Cause I could tell you why they don't use it.

(M) O.K. that's going to be my...what's your....

They don't use it because there's no pressure on the local level to do so whatsoever. Boards are only, in this area, and I don't speak for all the board members, but most board members are only informed about this as their administrators inform them. Secondly, I think historically administrators have got so much experience of avoiding any kind of hassles or paperwork that they can and....

That's absolutely true. I was just sitting here listening to all this and seeing differences between the board members and the, you'll notice for the most part who's doing all the talking is the superintendents for the most part. We're the ones that get that in the mail. The board members, I don't believe, get any information. I know the information I get is addressed to me, so the board members don't get the information, the principals don't get the information, the custodians don't get the information. I get that stuff in the mail, I open it up, if it's 28 pages to complete and I'm sitting there and I've got paperwork piled up on asbestos, on special education, on every other thing known to mankind, and I sit there and I think, wow, that's just what I need is another 25 hours to sit there and fill out an energy grant. I think that's the bottom line, I really do.

The reverse part of that is that the state comes out and says every school has to appoint an energy director, guess who the board is going to appoint?

The superintendent.

Right, and it won't work, it's a vicious circle.

But it's nice to have in an emergency.

(M) So for the emergency situations, it's worth doing that extra but....

Doing the 28 pages when the boiler blows up and I've got to replace it.

Now if the boiler would blow up, could you get money to...

You better have insurance....

Let's say if the boiler needs to be replaced, is that something you could get a loan for? If it's more efficient and it pays back....

(M) Has to be an efficiency....

If you replace the old boiler with a new boiler that's more efficient.

And would you still be looking at that 5 year payback figure, that's the bottom line, magic number?

I would say...

(M) It depends on the amount of the improvement. The comment about 5 years, I'm not sure that's a valid criteria. It varies according to the amount of the improvement.

My grant had to be around 4 and the loan was 7 so take your pick.

Our windows, I think they were around 10.

(M) Normally, the savings is computed and then it's computed how long it will take those savings to pay for the improvement you're making, so if you're looking at a \$30,000 boiler, and you save \$3,000 a year by going to a more efficient boiler, then it's going to pay itself in 10 years. Well, then you have a 20 year payback on a big project like that.

It isn't really too tough to find a more efficient boiler nowadays especially if you've got one that is very old.

A new one should be more efficient than the one that blew up, shouldn't it.

Yeah, \_\_\_\_\_

(M) It may pay to blow the old one up.

I guess blowing up is a poor term, but a boiler that needs to be replaced. Has anyone had ceiling fans approved?

I wouldn't think that would be an energy savings, it's just more, get rid of \_\_\_\_\_ of the air and keeping it more comfortable.

Keeping everybody cool at graduation.

But there's no energy savings in ceiling fans.

Depends if you can tie it in with a new boiler.

I just got done repainting my gym and it was 110 degrees up there where I painted all winter long.

I wouldn't say that wouldn't be energy savings....

Isn't that what they tell us in our homes, if you put in a ceiling fan, you're going to have a certain amount of energy saving?

If you lower that heat back down, that has to be energy savings.

Well, it ties in with a boiler then. Duct it off the top and blow it back in down at the bottom and add it on your boiler.

(M) I'm going to suggest we take about a 5 minute break. I want to get into another topic which dovetails right into this, how board members become informed or how people, school board, school administrators become informed about this, how the maintenance group, the maintenance engineers, how you become informed about programs like this and we'll look at how you became informed of it or what you think would be the best way to inform you more about it. I'm going to take about a 5 minute break so you can refill your coffee cup or get something cold to drink. And we will, I wanted to ask you, we may go about another 45 minutes, is that going to create any scheduling difficulty with any of you if we extend it about 15 minutes? (comments) We'll regroup here. The second part of what we're going to be talking tonight that I want to get into is what we're dealing with program information or learning more about the program. I've sensed quite a few of you have not been involved in the program and have not been aware of it and that's certainly understandable because a lot of this is programs, the grant program is a 6 or 7 year old program and those of you that are on the boards, you may have been on the board for a year or 2 years and relatively recent, so I want to ask in terms of this program, what you've heard about it now, knowing that it's a no-interest loan program with a payback period where you do an analysis, you can get \$2,500 per building to do the analysis, to compute your savings, to determine your payback. What do you feel would be the best ways to inform you or your organization about the potential benefits of such a program under the Nebraska Energy Efficiency School Loan Program? What would be the best way to get

you to become more informed or understanding of it, those of you that have not been involved in particular, I'd like to ask. (Name), you've heard about the program and you're thinking about it. What would be a good way to inform you?

For one thing, it's got to get through the superintendent's office. (laughing)

Long ways down to us peons.

I don't know if it should be in a school newspaper or some little town meeting or what. Like you said, it's not getting to everybody. I've never heard anything about it.

Neither have I. I just see the windows going up and what have you and nobody ever told me when or why.

If the school board was contacted, they are more money conscious than anybody in the school system is.

(M) (Name), what's your thought about informing people?

I've been on the board my 5th year and like Neil said before, the superintendents get the information, I sure didn't even know that they had such a program. So maybe, of course maybe the board presidents do receive a lot of that information but it's never been brought up at a meeting

They have like state school board conventions, they have presentations and that type of thing. That's what I'm asking, are there, how has the State Energy Office gone about trying to promote it?

(M) There have been presentations at the School Board Association meetings, but often they've been with a booth type situation where you're competing with how many different places there are to go and get information at those School Board Association meetings and there've been workshops done too, but there again, competing with other workshops on other topics, so there has been some of that. Do you think that's an effective way, through either state or regional association meetings?

I don't know if it's effective or not, I just, if you want to try and get the word out to some people, that might be a place you can catch some board members. I guess one of the things I think is you almost have to have an idea in mind that you have a project maybe that you need to work on before you're going to jump into it and say well, what could we do? I don't know, maybe that's not the case.

(M) You have to have a problem situation or need before you're going to investigate it then, is what you're.....

That's what I would kind of think might be the case but maybe if energy prices soar again maybe it would come back a little bit.

I think that's what triggered the original, and interest was the energy crisis.

Yeah, I do too. I think now we're kind of in a lull and I think people are, I don't there's probably the interest in it that, I know there isn't in my home like there used to be.

That's exactly right.

(M) How likely would you be to read, hear or see program information provided to you by say, direct mail, professional association meetings, regional meetings or information seminars, word of mouth from other associates in your area, general newspaper, radio, or television? Which of those would you be more inclined to think would be attract your attention?

I think small town newspapers need things to fill the paper anyway and people do a lot of talking and money is important to everybody so I think that would be a good course.

(M) Utilizing the local newspaper to kind of inform the community of what this is all about.

I would think an audio-visual presentation for school boards would be good. Wouldn't have to be very long, just get it on the agenda and give them 15 minutes of that information, at least they're exposed to it.

(M) What is the decision making process in your school district on issues such as this? When it comes to no-interest loan type programs? How do you perceive the decision making process from your points of view?

(silence)

I think board members pay attention to what's brought to them as a matter of priority and quite frankly, superintendents of schools, we get 50 pieces of important mail every week, it's important to somebody, it's not to us, but we get first class letters from the vocational department asking us to go to Kearney and do this, and get a letter from Title 9 asking us if we're doing all right on women's rights, we get letters from the state department, the energy office, etc., etc., etc. I think you have to, if the board gets this information and you believe in it, then the superintendents put it out there for them and they vote on it as a matter of priority. See, that's why the loan part's in trouble. You can borrow money for anything, it's a matter of priority. They're thinking about more things than this energy, whether to add another 4th grade teacher, whether to do this, and they got

public pressure to do this and so they respond the pressure. Constituent pressure. You have to send them a 25 cent first class letter, explain it to them, get the names of the board members from the state school boards and send it to them.

That would be my suggestion. In fact, last year now, in the last year, the NSBA is starting to send letters directly to the board members. I think prior to that they sent them to the superintendent...

....to distribute to the board members, right.

That didn't work.

(M) And now that it's going to the board members, you see it's being....

They've got to have a direct link, I think.

Another thing that might get a little input to the board is if that's what you're after, buy them a meal and make a presentation, like here.

Be honest, how many people would be here.

They're pretty busy, right now you wouldn't have any farmers here.

99% percent of the board members' responsibility is problem solving. If they got a problem, they're there to solve it. And I'd say that's how we got into a loan program is that we looked at our windows, and our windows needed to be replaced and board members said to the superintendent, is there a grant, isn't there a loan? And he said, I'll look into it. And that's the way it comes about, so he looks into it, and yeah, there's a program, it's a loan program, and one thing led to another and pretty soon they were involved in trying to find out what was available. Other schools may have windows that well, maybe go another 5, 6 years, maybe go 10 years. It's not a problem in that area, so therefore, it never got brought up.

(M) Well, one thing I'm hearing then, in terms of program information is getting it to the board members direct mail and again this theme of major problems are their role but they're not going to respond to every problem. In terms of, (Name), you were talking about with your situation, building, (Name), (Name), if you see something wasteful in a building, have you ever thought about contacting the energy office directly, or what's the decision making, as you see your role, they provide technical assistance at times too, to answer, (changing tape)

\_\_\_\_\_ (?)



(M) What would be a good way to inform you if the energy office wanted to let you know they have technical assistance available, that you can call them directly, what's a good way to reach you?

You mean to get ahold of me?

(M) Or to let you know these kinds of things are available, would it be something direct mail, in the newspaper.

The mail or newspaper or.....

As a rule, if we get something like that, it really wouldn't do us janitors much good to go tell the board about it or the superintendent, and they say, oh yeah, we've had those letters, that's our business.

Got those for years.

Yeah, we've been getting them for years, you guys just keep the floor clean and we'll worry about the roof.

If that letter said, give you a contact number directly, then would you contact it?

I don't know, I don't want to step on anybody's feet.

I think that's what they'd be doing.

Yeah, I wouldn't want to go over nobody's head. If I see a problem, I take it to my superintendent and tell him about it and I took my list for the summer of things that needed to be fixed and worked on and it's up to him what he can approve, what he wants us to do and what we can't do. I wouldn't feel a bit good about calling some energy office for something I thought was better for the school. I'm not an administrator.

(M) But it might, let's look at it another way. If there was an information vehicle for informing maintenance engineers about some of the things that qualify or do not qualify, for example, do fans qualify or don't they qualify? Then at that point, and I'm raising this to those of you that are superintendents, principals, administrators, if they got this information of what qualifies, doesn't qualify, and they saw a situation in the building and came to you, would you see that as appropriate, to inform them by direct mail of what is available and not available? And they would still come to you and say, I see this situation where we have this moisture leaking out.....

I think they'd be like, superintendents get that mail, they're real busy, they don't ...

I think superintendents would respond to a letter to them as you just described.

And if you're going to do that, send one both of them at the same time so they get them on the same day \_\_\_\_\_ (?)

If you send out a list of what was qualified and what wasn't, no superintendent that I know would throw that away.

Send one to the custodians too if you wanted, send it the same day.

Or the presidents or the board members. Or all three.

But if you're trying to sell a program, it's like Bill said, they respond to problems, and they've gotten more than just this one. They're going to do what's priority. No-interest or not.

(M) (Name), do you think it would be appropriate to send out information in that way?

I think the more people you'd have, the more aware of the whole program, you know, the more cognizant people would be of it.

(M) 'Cause one of the things that I'm sensing is that there's quite a few people here tonight that are not aware of what qualifies or does not qualify and that includes people that have gone through the grant application process as well as people who haven't. There are some questions about what is the criteria, what really qualifies or doesn't qualify. Is that an accurate, am I reading the group correctly?

Very accurate for me.

Especially for the loan program, now the grant program everybody was kind of excited about and kind of kept up on it and knew what was going to be awarded. But now that the loan program has come about, and myself, I don't know what more is involved. I don't know.

(M) 'Cause one of the things that I asked when we took our break, was the issue with fans. There have been some situations where I guess fans have qualified, so it depends on each situation.

We just put some in the gym, nine of them, the total bill was \$1,600. Why are you going to bother with a grant?

(M) There's the point, I think, (Name) makes a good one, is that and I heard this in another group too. Sometimes it's just easier to do it yourself than, on the small projects, than to go through...

Then you'd have to have an energy audit first \_\_\_\_\_.

(M) Another thing is if you've had a previous audit and been involved, once you've done the initial audit, you may just need, you don't have to go through a whole audit process on minor things. You have to have an initial audit but once that initial one is done, some of these add-on things can be done without a total audit again.

Can you do an audit for one specific thing? Like you've done an audit 8 years ago and all of a sudden something new comes up, can you do a TA audit just on that one item? You don't have to do the whole building?

(M) I believe you can. I think you can just do it on, it's much more flexible now than it was under the grant program. There's, and it's not as rigid as it was under the grant program. Now, again, I'm not part of energy office, you'd have to call them and double check on that, but it's my understanding that these audits can be targeted to specific problems, that you don't have to go through as comprehensive an audit with the loan program as you did with the grant program, I know that's true. But again, each situation is a little different so you kind of have to check with them and see. One of the things I think is that getting out the word of what some of these changes are is important to do and we're kind of asking you, what's the best way to get out the word on some of the changes now with the loan program or the shared savings program versus the old grant program because the grant program was federally funded, and with the federal funds, there were a lot of requirements. The loan program is not a federal program, it's money generated from pumping gas and oil and so there are excise or surcharge funds that are available and there's a little bit more flexibility with those funds. This was established by the legislature, it's a state program that the legislature assessed to generate the money to do these things.

Are they going to get a copy of this, of your report?

(M) They meaning...

The legislature?

(M) I'm sure it will be public information, sure. Any time you do a project like this, why it's public information, so sure, you bet.

I guess I feel kind of from a principal's standpoint, if I get something from the energy office concerning this, it's probably going to take a fairly low priority for me in my day. There's just so many things that I would put above that and that's probably not the right attitude to have, but I just have more things I think I would put above that in my position.

In a small school, the principal's job is normally more dealing with the educational operation than the plant management.

Yeah, maybe if it was a situation where it was such a gross problem that it's affecting the program, but then it's going to be something that I'm not just going to be aware of it, so I guess what I'm saying is I think maybe from my point of view, a principal would not be very instrumental in the process.

I would venture to say, we put windows in our building under the loan program and everybody sees the windows in the building because they're a complete change in the look of the building. I would say less than 1% know that there's a loan on them, my constituents. I don't think they know that there's a loan on it, they know that those windows have been put in and obviously I'm going to have to pay for them, that's the only thing they understand.

But they'll tell you when their taxes went up, what the Hell.

\_\_\_\_\_ they were put in there, I noticed them because we go through (town) coming down and they looked nice.

I know another place where you can hit superintendents that wanted to know about it might be Administrators Days, have a session there.

(M) The administrative days, the national, state....

In Kearney in August.

(M) If you could design an ideal program for promoting more energy efficient usage in your school buildings, what would you recommend? (silence) You know now that we've talked, if you could design an ideal program for promoting more efficient energy usage in your school building facilities, what would you recommend? If you could change this program in any way, what would you recommend? (silence)

You're talking about the loan program?

(M) Yes. And now we've talked about those of you that haven't been involved in it and what the program is, I think.

You need to charge for another night, I think.

I believe like these superintendents are talking would be to simplify the process a little bit.

(M) Simplify the paperwork? Application process?

\_\_\_\_\_ and all of a sudden there was light.

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We're not saving energy now anymore.

Well, it sounds to me like you're trying to sell a program that's really not that high a priority with a lot of school districts. Borrowed money is still borrowed money, whether there's no interest or not and if they've got a problem, they'll, like Bill said, they'll go look for grants or loans to take care of it but their not, amidst all their problems, I don't think they're going to say, Eureka! we can borrow money through the to put a stack damper on our boiler.

(M) So it's a question of need as you perceive it.

I think so.

I can see where they're coming from too, I think a lot of energy could be saved if you had a good energy audit and it could open up your eyes to the fact that there was a lot of places that money could be saved and then besides that, you could borrow money on it and then pay it back as you save it.

But then everybody's got to have an audit. Like I said at the start of the program.

There is no question about it, everybody's got to have an audit. I hate to see them come out and say that all schools are going to have an audit. I hate to see that.

That's the only way they took care of the asbestos problem.

And the fees for the audit is going to be ...

If I had any complaints on the program, I think it would be more attractive if we didn't have to put 50% upfront. You know, you have to pay for half of it yourself upfront. The other complaint I have is I've been on the board for 12 years and I have yet to see a good engineer or good architect period. These guys are they're professional but I don't know, I think they're trying to take too many shortcuts.

(Name), can I speak to that a minute. You know what they do, energy-wise. They got it both ways. When you build a building with them, they over engineer you so you got three boilers when you need one, you got 45 air changers when you need 4. Because they're getting a percentage of everything that goes into that building, then they turn around and want to save energy for you by doing an audit. They're the wrong people doing the audit.

It makes me sad to work with those people.

(M) Bill, when you say the 50% up-front, now are you referring to the old grant program or also the loan program that you \_\_\_\_\_

The loan program. I don't remember how much we had to pay up-front but we had to pay a certain amount, in other words, if the project was \$100,000, we had to pay \$50,000 upfront and the rest was carried for a period of time. Isn't that the way it is?

(M) I think it is with the grant program, but with the loan program I don't believe you have to pay up-front. The grant program was that way. That was, I asked you because I was trying to determine if there's confusion about this and I think there is.

The loan program you pay out of your savings.

I'm sure we had to pay some up-front but I can't, I don't know for sure.

(M) The grant program, the old grant program, there was an initial matching on it, and on the loan...

That was a small percentage, that wasn't, that was 10% or something.

When we went on our loan, we didn't pay 50% up-front. By any means.

No, I thought it was maybe 20% on the grant.

I thought for sure we had to pay \_\_\_\_\_

I think it was 80 - 20 on the grant.

I think maybe some of it would have been doing some of those things that were not included in the audit.

(M) All right, that's probably then.....

You included things that weren't covered.

Yeah, that's right

(M) So you made some improvements that didn't come under the loan program so then when you did those additional things... yeah.

As part of the whole project.

The loan that we got didn't cover everything that we had done, but still, it didn't cost us 50%, I think we only had to put like \$2,000 some dollars out, something like that.

I think that's what it was now that I.....

(M) Well, the loan program, for whatever you qualify for is just a payback kind of thing. There's no up-front principle amount that you pay, it's all return based on energy savings but the old.....

Gary? (yeah) Every year there's a northeast \_\_\_\_\_ now they'll be put on at custodial schools or something.

It's coming up. You ought to make arrangement to have somebody speak for about 40 minutes to those custodians at that meeting about these things you're talking about, so then they know about it.

(M) Good idea. That came out in the Lincoln group too, same comment, they said that would be when they get together for their association meeting, just like you have for the school board members, for the school administrators, you have your annual meeting, this would be the one...

This gets \_\_\_\_\_ (?)

(M) We had a gentleman from one school district near Lincoln, I don't remember the area, but he was in the maintenance area and he had literally put the whole grant together. He'd done, he was not a registered engineer, but he'd done the whole thing and it was through his input that it got really going. He brought it up to the superintendent and then to the board and so there have been instances where it has been generated by the maintenance engineer in the school because they saw a need. Have you talked with any other people in the area that have been involved in the loan program. I mean, tonight, obviously you're hearing from other people but prior to coming here this evening, had you visited with any other people that have been a part of the program? Do you think that would be something worthwhile to think about, to have people who have been involved in the program come and talk to you about it?

I think if you're going to do presentations at the Administrators Days or at these custodial schools, you need to have people who've been actively involved in it as part of those presentations.

They'll be able to tell us or give us an idea of what the good points and bad points are, pitfalls to avoid.

(M) That was my thinking, that it might be more meaningful to you to hear from people who've been through it as well as from the energy office. To have people who have gone through the program and can tell you how they've benefitted or what kinds of obstacles they've had in going through it. (Name), you're nodding your head, would that be helpful to you?

Yeah, I would think so, especially if you were going to be looking at this. People who have gone through it may be able to give you some of the answers you're looking for that otherwise you wouldn't even think of.

(M) (Name), how would you feel about that, would that be something that would be interesting to you if that was on the agenda, would you go to it?

\_\_\_\_\_ experience the same thing, Nebraska Department of Energy would want \_\_\_\_\_ loan program and they give the seminars. \_\_\_\_\_ (?)

(M) Be more credible if you had people there that have actually done it.

(M) No, I was thinking of a maintenance engineer who's been through it talking to that group, school board member who's been through it talking to other school board members perhaps, matching it up.

Superintendents would have to talk to the custodians about the paperwork to go along with the loan and it doesn't make a lot of sense.

(M) No I was thinking of someone in their association area that has been a participant.

I have to take 3 days of my vacation if I want to go there, so I'm not going, they're not going to help me with my snow scooping and polishing floors, I know how, and I'm not going to take a vacation to go find out how to polish a floor.

(M) I'm going to ask the bottomline question here, and this is the last thing we're going to talk about. You've answered part of, but I'm going to ask it more directly. If you had an updated energy management analysis audit done for your school facilities



which indicated there would be sufficient savings, let's assume you went ahead and had the analysis done, how likely would you be to go ahead and apply for a no-interest loan under the Nebraska Energy Efficiency School Loan Program? If you found there was a savings, knowing what you know....

It depends on the total price, you know, for a few bucks, we'll do it ourselves. Few bucks, few thousand, we'll do it ourselves, if we're talking big bucks, we'll want to finance it one way or the other.

(M) So it's how much you're going to be able to save that's really the bottom line.

I think for large items it is good financing.

(M) So those of you that have been through some of this, you don't see it as being a big financing tool right now, those of you that have not been through it, unless you could be convinced it really was going to be a fairly large....

Why would you borrow money in most of our districts, that represent small districts here, why would you borrow \$5,000 or maybe \$10,000 to handle something like this, you pull it out of your building fund or your depreciation funds or whatever you've got, and pay yourself back.

One thing, you could collect the interest on it.

\$10,000 interest annually, depends on how you've got it invested, would run \$500-\$700 yearly.

(M) And what you're saying, the score card information and that and the amount of time you're spending on that, you may...

What's your time worth, are you \$20 an hour to do that 20 hours of paperwork?

That's the only reason I can give you for doing that. I'm not arguing \_\_\_\_\_.

I'm not trying to attack anything here.....

(M) I think you're being very candid which we appreciate. This is the type of feedback we need. It's important because this is going to have an impact on how some of this is presented in the future and without asking, why, we wouldn't get this kind of feedback. And the feedback we've gotten tonight has been very consistent with the feedback we've gotten in some of the other groups. There's a few things here that have been a little different, but overall, it's a the major kinds of situations are the ones where people seem to...the one thing I saw a little bit

differently tonight was that there was less awareness of the program, the new program. There was a lot of awareness about some of the former programs, the grant program and that, but as you get into the smaller school districts, I don't think there's as much awareness about what this new program can cover and...

I don't know if I agree with that. I don't think there's an administrator in the state that's not aware of this loan program. They know about it but you see, it's a matter of priorities. It's still borrowing money. They're only going to borrow money when they need to borrow money.

But still, you ask for new windows and they say, well we don't have the money. There's the money.

But they don't have the money. The money isn't there...

But there's a way.....

Just because the State Energy Office is loaning money at zero percent, you can go down to the bank and borrow it at 6%,

Because they don't want to even borrow the interest-free money now, they wait 10 years and inflation has gone up 20% so they want to do it then? Huh? So doesn't it make sense to borrow interest-free now and get her done and have your savings?

But you get out here to public school systems, how much rice can a Chinaman eat, in other words you need 6 new school buses, you need all new windows, you got to double your elementary teachers because enrollment increases, these are all put on priority, you're going to borrow all that money? No, you're going to say, well, we got all the kids at school, we gotta have the other teachers, so you're right, you're going to wait \_\_\_\_\_.

What I'm getting at is something that should have been done 15 years ago, the longer you wait, the more it costs, the longer the wait, the harder it is to do, because they've got so many other programs thrown at them. Been paid for long ago.

The longer you drive those buses \_\_\_\_\_.

It just doesn't pay to put it off.

I think that energy audit is well worth the \$2,500.

Yeah, because I think it shows an instance where you could put out a little money and save a lot of money, in other words, you didn't have to put out a lot of money for stack dampers and stuff to save a lot of money.

(M) Perhaps one of the best ways to get more informed about this would be having the energy audit so that you'd know what's available. If you had that done, then the other parts of the program, people would become aware of.

I discovered our building was built in 1923 and nobody ever knew that they had radiator put inside the walls and they were heating the inside walls and they were put in there for a purpose to create a draft so that.....

Those big open.....

Yeah, those big ducts that go up there and we have radiators in there and we didn't need them anymore. We blocked them off....

Is that the place where you put the new windows too?

Yes.

You know our energy audit showed we put windows in where we didn't need them.

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Lousy as they were or are, the insulation did 4 times as much as the windows did.

(M) I told you I'd keep you an extra 15 minutes and I'm watching the clock and it's about 15 minutes. I just want to thank you again for coming and your input will be very, very helpful. As I said earlier, this is being funded by a federal grant with the idea being what we're doing in Nebraska, how can it be used in other parts of the country too.

closing comments

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