

allow, and we did work with the Hospital Association about this, we do allow somebody to get a CON, despite this moratorium, if there's an emergency situation, so if a boiler goes out or some other situation goes out, and so that's recognized. And, in addition, we also allow for this moratorium to be exempted if there is a clear savings in money. So anybody out there who says we shouldn't have a moratorium doesn't recognize the amendments we have in the bill because if you have a proposal that will save money you can go through and if you have an emergency situation you can go through. The moratorium wouldn't apply. So that says that those people that are pushing to allow themselves to go through the CON process have proposals that aren't emergencies and do not save money, otherwise they'd be able to make it through. And so I think that's important to recognize, that we've tried to be sensitive to the particular concerns that people have expressed. We have made some modifications in the committee amendments, but again the kind of expenditures we're talking about, the hundreds of millions of dollars, just simply can't be justified any longer. We've got to find a way to put a brake on these costs and one of the ways is evidently to just say no. You know, the Certificate of Need process has been sort of a speed-bump on expenditures on capital construction and what we're doing here is putting up a stop sign, a stop light and a barrier that will be there for at least a year as we work through the situation and then those will be removed, but now maybe a new course, a new charting of direction will be in place so that we'll know where we're going. But, in the meantime, the speed-bump of CON will be a little more aggressive because we'll have said absolutely no. And that's been a disappointment. I was...I was one of the lead sponsors of Certificate of Need back in 1979 and I thought it would do a lot more than it has. It needs to be part of the system, but it is obviously not enough and, until we get a planning system and a process and then have tougher CON, we're simply not accomplishing the goal of containing costs in a significant way and that's exactly what we have to do. If we're spending four and a half billion dollars, the nickel and dime solutions aren't going to work any more. We've got to make some major strides forward to save money and, again, I think it's very important to try and find a way to control costs. But, as I said, I understand the rural needs and the desire to not be under this. We had a bill last year that failed by only two votes I think to go forward that was exactly as proposed with Senator Byars and so, with that understanding again, I'm not going to oppose the Byars amendment. I can live with it.