

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Dierks.

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Madam President and members of the body. I, too, am supportive of this amendment and, as Senator Wesely said, I've had difficulties too recently with the Certificate of Need process. I think that it's been almost unwieldily and somewhat abused so I haven't had that many problems with some of the restrictions on the Certificate of Need. In this particular instance, though, with the passage of this bill, without the amendments that we're talking about, we stop procedures that are currently being done and I'm not sure that that's fair to those people who are doing them. I think we need to let these people go ahead. If there's some sort of a grandfathering clause it would be better, but this will take care of our needs so I would support this amendment that...this current amendment that Senator Byars has introduced and hope that you will too. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Dierks. Senator Bohlke.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Madam President and members, I rise to support the Byars amendment. Sitting here and listening to the discussion, I recall certainly the comments from Senator Hall in one of our last sessions, and I can't remember if it was a special session or a regular session, they kind of all meld into one, but talking about the problems in the Omaha area with the overbuilding and the competition between the hospitals and who they were serving, and as I continue to talk to some other senators from Omaha it seems that we, indeed, are talking about two different situations--that that is going on between the hospitals in Omaha and then, as we talk in the rural area, the need to have the ability to do some things in order to streamline and become more cost-effective in our delivery of services. It seems to me that there seems to definitely be two separate situations and, therefore, I think this amendment deals with that and I rise to support it and feel that to lump everyone together when clearly the numbers that Senator Wesely pointed out, a large portion, are in the urban areas and in the rural areas, if we really say that we want, we are concerned with rural health care, I don't think we should handcuff those hospitals and health care facilities in...as they make attempts to become actually more efficient and update sometimes in order to save money and do a better job in the delivery of service. Thank you.