

Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members. I had placed an amendment on this bill and I've had a chance to talk with Senator Dierks and Senator Vrtiska, the primary sponsors of the bill, and some of my concerns have been eased. I thought I'd just take a couple of minutes to talk about them and to clarify a few of the issues of the bill. First off, I want to commend Senator Dierks and Senator Vrtiska, Senator Horgan and Senator Schellpeper for their introduction of the bill; and I know they have a sincere desire to try to address the concerns that they have and that I have for providing for family practice physicians in our rural areas of the state. I think we're all aware of the problems that exist in that regard. That is a concern that we share, that is a goal that I think that we all share. The question I had with this bill is how effective will it be in accomplishing the goal we all share of trying to get more family physicians to rural Nebraska? Well, first off, the bill raised the question of what we're now spending on residency programs as a state, and the answer to that question is something close to \$6 million. And in addition to that, we have expenditures over \$20 million that we spend on the University of Nebraska Medical Center to try and train medical personnel for our state. The concern I've always had is that out of our medical center something like 60 percent of our graduates leave Nebraska. And when we put in the resources and tax dollars that we do to have over half of our graduates leave our state, that concerns me, particularly when we have such a shortage of medical personnel in rural areas of the state. So I was wanting to have some information on LB 152 that I have incomplete information, partial information but enough that might give you some sense of why I was concerned about the bill. I've passed it out with a sheet that you should have on your desk. What it indicates is that the University of Nebraska Medical Center has a number of different programs, Omaha, Kearney, Grand Island, and one dealing with Air Force. And the success rate that they have had over the last 10 years is essentially that about 38 percent of their family practice residencies end up in rural Nebraska, about 28 percent in urban Nebraska, about 34 percent leave the state. Now keep in mind overall graduates at the medical center about 60 percent leave the state so that's pretty good. They end up with about 34 percent leaving the state, about a third. The family practice program here in Lincoln has better success. They have 41 percent of their graduates in rural Nebraska, 41 percent in urban Nebraska and 19 percent,