

Senator Vrtiska and Senator Dierks. I know their commitment in this area. I also want to commend Dr. Raymond from Clarkson Hospital who I've known a long time from Senator Dierks' district in O'Neill and now in Clarkson who I know is very committed to this and I, for one, despite some concerns, feel with the people involved that we ought to give the program a chance to succeed and if we can follow up and watch what happens, study it, I understand there is a three-year review process built into the bill and then look at the current programs. We might have to revisit the issue, but my hope is it will succeed and so with that I would support the advancement of the bill.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Dierks.

SENATOR DIERKS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, we're talking about a bill that stimulates these residents to go back to the rural areas, because there are incentives in the bill that come to these residents after they have left the residency program and are actually in practice in these counties under 20,000 people so there is a real incentive there for them to do this. And the residency programs at Clarkson and Creighton will be recruiting students based with this knowledge. So I don't think there is any question about the fact that these students will be encouraged to go back and practice in the rural area. I think you should know that in the last seven years we've had six hospitals close in rural Nebraska because doctors have left them in counties under 8,000 people. So I think it's essential that we do something, start taking care of the shortage we have. This is the way to do it. We have gotten into the program of the RHEN program and the RHOP program. They're going to recruit students to these rural areas but we need to further this by providing the funding in the residency programs to ensure that RHOP and RHEN is successful. So I would urge your support to this piece of legislation. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Dierks. Any other discussion on the advancement? Seeing no other discussion, we do have a motion to advance LB 152. All those in favor say aye. A machine vote has been requested. We will now vote on the advancement of LB 152. All those in favor vote aye, opposed vote no. Have you all voted? Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 27 ayes, 1 nay on the advancement of 152.