

SENATOR WESELY: Wait a minute.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Oh, wait a minute. Now, Senator Wesely, I am sorry.

SENATOR WESELY: I don't mean to be persistent but I would like the chance, if you don't mind, Madam President. I do support the legislation but I thought it would be valuable to have Senator Baack again, for the record, indicate how these development districts would integrate into the announced network that the Department of Economic Development and the Governor are working on. Currently, I know these districts exist and I understand they have a relationship with the State Department of Economic Development, but I would ask Senator Baack to talk about how that relationship would evolve with the passage of the bill, and how they would fit into this attempt to have a network of interagency cooperation.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Speaker Baack.

SPEAKER BAACK: Yes, thank you, Madam President. Yes, Senator Wesely, you know, we talked about it somewhat on General File when the bill was originally up. The intent of this is to allow the Department of Economic Development to work more closely with these development districts. There has been some question, since these development districts were never statutorily authorized, that when they would receive funds as to whether or not they could funnel these funds to these development districts, and that was one of the problems that was brought to our attention as to why we wanted to put them into statute so that could flow better. I think that the Department of Economic Development sees these as a very important tool to the development, especially in the rural areas, and I know, coming from a rural area, I know that my area development district has been very, very actively involved in economic development in my area. They probably have a better understanding of economic development for my area than the actual Department of Economic Development does because those are the people that are out there on a daily basis, there are local governments that are involved, and the way that cities and counties are operating at the present time, they know what kinds of things their cities and counties can attract, what kind of industries they are looking for. They know those things firsthand, and it is a very grassroots kind of an organization. And I think the Department