

Lincoln and Omaha, urban areas with health departments, we feel very strongly that this legislation will help all of the state and benefit all of us by putting it into place and helping our rural areas access public health services. With that, I don't know if Senator Lynch, I have got some time left, would you like to take the rest of my time? Are you ready?

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Lynch, about a minute.

SENATOR LYNCH: Good morning.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Good morning, Senator Lynch.

SENATOR LYNCH: Don pretty well covered it. Quickly, in the state right now there are 18 departments of health, 11 county health departments, two city-county health departments, four city health departments, a multicounty health department which includes Grant, Hooker, Thomas, Arthur, and Keith, and also there is a State Health Department demonstration project which includes Chase, Hayes, Dundy, Hitchcock counties. About a little over half of the state's population are now unserved by public health systems as we get into the indigent health care problem in the state. This would help considerably. The four people, by the way, are a sanitarian, a public health nurse, a health educator, and clerk. This is not intended to duplicate, overlap or supersede or confuse what now exists. All of those public health agencies should continue to exist. This would not take over the responsibility of the local jurisdictions, or the state, in some cases, have in these areas of public health. By the way, Nebraska spends, except for those demonstration grants, nothing on public health, and the worst argument in the world to use is that we spend nothing, so we should spend something. This is not the argument. I am not saying that at all. But we do know that in those areas of the state, over half of the population, none in Senator Wesely's or my district, by the way, where none of this exists, there is, in fact, a serious problem. I will turn my light on, Mr. Chairman, Mr. President, and continue if it's necessary.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Lynch, the Chair was in error because Senator Wesely was opening.

SENATOR LYNCH: Okay.

SPEAKER BARRETT: You have approximately 4 1/2 minutes left.