

Schellpeper to offer me something and so far, and I know he is working diligently on it and I think that we can work out something if someone can give us the expertise how to address that need, I'm very willing to do it. I'm not saying that this is perfect. I'm not saying that my ideas are perfect, but I will guarantee you, and if you look through the list of supporters in the book, how many opponents are there? Every one of these people are knowledgeable people and in the nursing profession. They know what the situation is and I have asked for their help so it is not something that I wildly dreamt up myself. And with that, I'll give my time...I don't know whose time I'm on now. Senator...

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Rod Johnson.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Mr. President and members, I've been trying to follow the debate on this issue rather closely. I must admit, I'm not very qualified and usually do not participate in debate on health issues, but this is an interesting debate for me. I'm trying to follow how this will impact rural Nebraska and it appears it has a direct relationship to rural Nebraska. And while I'm concerned about the cost amount and I'm concerned about how the program will actually work, I see some deficiencies in this bill that I don't like, but I'm not going to support the kill motion. I believe at this particular time I'm going to vote against that. I'd like to hear the comments and the debate on Senator Schellpeper's bill as well so that I have a perspective on how these two bills might differ. So, that's the premise I'm working from. The point I'd like to make is that as I have listened to the debate I've heard an awful lot of discussion about maintaining, I assume, a quality of life in rural Nebraska that we'd all like to have. I'd also like to say that rural Nebraska is changing. There is no question about that. We can't go back to the way that rural Nebraska used to be. I think based upon technology, based upon telecommunication advancements, based upon transportation advancements, things are happening in rural Nebraska that really, I think, cause me to believe that things are not...services are not going to be delivered in the same way they used to be and I think many of our rural hospitals will not survive. It is not that they are not trying to do a good job in providing health care to rural Nebraskans, it's just that costwise it is not efficient and effective, many times, to preserve those hospitals. I've got little hospitals in my district that probably are not going to survive. I'd like to do whatever I can to help them survive,