

comparable service at less cost is available and before the Legislature or will be before the Legislature through the budget discussions.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Any other discussion? If not, Senator Wesely, anything further?

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would hope...I understand Senator Warner's concerns. I think the appropriate thing to do is to advance the bill to Final Reading and consider when the budget does come out exactly what appropriation level is funded in the appropriations package. What we're discussing here and we can get into it if, in fact, anything does come out of the Appropriations Committee in this regard is a totally different concept on how we move forward in the effort to match businesses in Nebraska to one another so that we can purchase Nebraska products and retain within Nebraska the business we already generate from our business community. This is an effort that is already under way in Lincoln and self-funded privately. This is a bill that's come out of the private sector that has come to me and said, we want to get involved with matchmaking on a local basis. We want to put up some private money but we want the state to be involved and we will match state money dollar for dollar, and this bill calls for that on a local basis, dollar for dollar matching the private money. There is no comparable proposal that's anywhere in sight. The budget proposal, as mentioned by Senator Warner, is only under consideration and I think the kind of concept we have here is the best route to take. For the money that we're talking about, for every 125,000 that would be distributed to the local regional councils involved, would be matched by the 125,000 in private resources. By doing that, you match the private sector with the public sector. You have local control involved. You have local businesses working together through the already existing structures of the economic regions or the...or the business development councils. This is the route that they prefer. This is the route that will be most successful. And if you have hesitancy, Senator Warner, and anybody else in the body, I suggest that we proceed with the bill at this point and consider further whatever budget proposals come through. The bill will have to be held with the A bill until the budget is dealt with and at that point we can deal with this issue further. But I would ask your support in the advancement of the bill at this time.