

They are in these towns because that's where the universities are and the state colleges are. They are also in North Platte and out in Scottsbluff because those are underserved areas. They don't have the state college or university network, but we thought they needed to have that assistance and that was some legislation Senator Scofield and I and others sponsored a couple of years ago. The idea is to cover the state, to have people that really know something about economic development, that have the resources to work with these businesses and entrepreneurs that are tied to universities and colleges with expertise that can take and match up resources with needs for these businesses. The regional offices, Senator Schellpeper talked about these folks going out and having coffee with folks. Well that's wonderful and I think that's swell, but I'm afraid that isn't really what we need. We don't need more people out running around having coffee with people, we need more people sitting down and talking about how we take an idea and turn it into a profitable service or product that can be built into a company that grows and prospers in this state. Now that's a wonderful thing and I think it's great that we have more public relations, and we need public relations, but I just wonder, is that really where we're at today? I think we're not. I think we're far beyond that. We need networking and we've got networks. We've got the NBDCs, we have economic development districts out around the state and they're trying to do their thing only I'm afraid they are terribly underfunded and unable to maybe accomplish all their goals, but it seems to me that these regional offices failed. They failed us once. They were seen as PR offices, not successful in doing the job that they wanted and they were eliminated and they weren't eliminated by me, they were eliminated by the Appropriations Committee several years ago and we've functioned since that time, I think, quite well without them and now we're coming back to that as an extension to say we've got to help rural Nebraska. This is how we're going to help rural Nebraska. It isn't the solution to the problems of rural Nebraska. We need expertise, we need resources and we need those available anywhere and everywhere in the state that people have a demand for them. I really think that we're better off doing different uses with this money. I've talked about a matched marketing...

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...concept. You take that idea and you work with businesses on a smaller regional basis and you match up