

rural areas of the state, and it is not just the rural areas of the state because the NBDC offices, and that is how I will refer to them from now on, NBDC is Nebraska Business Development Centers, they are located in Omaha, Lincoln, Wayne, North Platte, Chadron, Scottsbluff, Peru, and Kearney. So a couple of these would be in the same location as were being proposed for regional offices, but rather than add new offices, these would add the staffing to already existing offices, so we don't waste more bricks and mortar. But in addition, it adds staffing that would actually do something, not just folks that go out and have coffee or are the eyes and ears of the department but are, in fact, people that are skilled in doing something to help businesses, actually skilled to work with the businesses that we have in those areas of the state to do the kind of job that we need to provide the assistance that they desire out across the State of Nebraska. See, the difference is this, a regional office by the Department of Economic Development in the past has been primarily a public relations office for the department, the eyes and ears of the department. They talk to people, and they...I don't know what all they end up doing but they don't actually accomplish anything on the local level. By having the small business development centers have more staffing, they are able to have more people who have actual skills in packaging financial needs and working on marketing plans and working with the actual resource needs of these small businesses, and they are already set up to do that, already doing that, but they are understaffed. What you then do is they link up with the universities and state colleges across the state. The reason you have eight of these, with the exception of Scottsbluff and North Platte, they all link up to a state college or to a university, and that is...

PRESIDENT: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: ...why they are located where they are.

PRESIDENT: May I interrupt you. (Gavel.) Please, let's hold the volume down so that we can hear the speakers. Thank you.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President. All I am saying is this is a much better approach. If you want more staffing spread out around the state, this approach actually accomplishes something. They don't take people and refer them somewhere back in Lincoln, they actually have the people that know what they are doing to work with these folks, and on a local basis. If