

followed by Senator Scofield.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. President, I will speak briefly. Senator Conway, I totally understand your point. I appreciate the intent. I know that with your amendment that we would still have four branch offices and I'm aware of that and they would be in parts of the state that would be helpful, I'm very aware of that. My opposition to your amendment is simply philosophical. Could I have order, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: (Gavel.) I hesitated to call it without your permission. Please hold it down so that we can hear the speaker.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. President. Simply stated, it is not, in my opinion, the position of the Legislature to begin going through and telling an agency or telling a department, we don't care what you feel is necessary; we don't care what the executive branch thinks is necessary; we are going to actually tell you where these are going to be. I don't think that is the role of the Legislature. We can't even tell the University of Nebraska where we would like them to spend their money. If we tried to do that, we would obviously be in a world of trouble. So we don't question that, though we have frustrations with it. I don't believe it is the role of the Legislature, even though the intentions are good, the precedent that we would be setting saying we want it here, here and here, would open up, you know, pork barrel so badly as a precedent that I dare say we not open up that Pandora's box. So philosophically I understand Senator Conway's, I understand it would accomplish basically what I am trying to do with the amendment, but philosophically the Legislature should not do that. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Scofield, followed by Senator Langford, please.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Mr. President and members, I think that if you are, in fact, going to support the creation of new field offices, Senator Conway has a very reasonable nonduplicative suggestion. And I would further add that some of these field offices out there could be well utilized in terms of where the NBDC centers are. One of the experiences that we've had in the Panhandle, again, because of the mileages with the Chadron and Scottsbluff office working together, I would assume that Senator