

He probably has as much expertise on essential air service as anybody in the state right now. Anne Beaurivage, I think, is a useful resource over in the Department of Aeronautics, having been in Washington at one time and working on these kinds of issues. And I agree with you, that we should, in fact, make sure that these all fit together, that's one of the things that has to be accomplished by this study, is making sure those all fit together. The other thing that I think presents an interesting opportunity, Senator Baack and I were approached by a representative of major jet carriers in this nation. As far as I know they've never been in the State of Nebraska before, and he flew in to visit with us about this bill. I think there is some recognition growing out there that rural states are feeling very much bypassed and don't have the access of all kinds of transportation services that we used to have, as evidenced by some of the conversation here this morning on the floor about the loss of rail service, the loss of bus service, and now our concern about jet service. I think we got, basically, a commitment out of that person to continue to go in and champion the continuation and the need for essential air service, as I think he learned some things about the situation in Nebraska by his visit here, and became aware of what our needs are for intrastate connections, and even connections that then get us to the major hub airports, all of which happen to be located outside the boundaries of the State of Nebraska. So this bill has had an impact already as far away as Washington, D.C., I think, in sending a message about what our concerns are in this state about a lack of...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: ...of air service. And so it's very important that those pieces all be put together and that in our plan that we ask this authority to bring to the Legislature, those will be things that we will be looking for as a Legislature. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Dierks, please.

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I just wanted to stand in support of this bill. I think Senator Scofield has brought an excellent piece of legislation to us. I believe this type of legislation plugs Nebraska squarely into the future. It's just vital that we keep all these available methods of transportation available. We're having difficulty