

So, with those comments, I will sit down. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Rod Johnson, please, followed by Senator Hall.

SENATOR HALL: Mr. President and members, I rise to support Senator Smith's amendment. I can't speak from the appropriations background as to how we're going to make all these things balance, but I do think that, as I have traveled around my legislative district and I see how important those senior citizen centers are to the welfare of not only the elderly but the community spirit that is centered there, I think it's vitally important that we do what we can to continue those services, whether it's meals on wheels or, in many cases, a place for the elderly to congregate together and to share time together. And I have had a chance to see most of them and I guess, you know, it's an area especially in small towns where we have so limited amount of activity that a senior citizen center in Polk, Nebraska or Osceola or wherever it might be is vitally important to the community that it serves. And I see this as an attempt to recognize a significant need out there. As I have met with some of the administrators of senior citizen service programs in their various counties, there is no question there is a great deal of need. And you look at the third district, since I'm often asked about that, we're an aging population in this state and especially as you get into areas in rural Nebraska and many of those smaller farm communities where you have retired individuals who have moved off the farm into the community and are utilizing the services that might be there, if they are there at all. And I think while we're not jeopardizing the success or failure of a social service program like this, it does seem necessary to me that we're trying to do something to help our senior citizens who, I think, want to continue to be and play an active role in their communities and be active citizens and this is one way for them to congregate with people their own age and have a place to go, have a place to meet, to share a meal together and to, hopefully, socialize, because that's really what a lot of these social service or these senior citizen centers do provide. So, just based on firsthand experience, I guess, in seeing these facilities and the people who meet there, I strongly support Senator Smith's motion and I guess I tend to feel the frustration that both Senator Smith and Senator Scofield have, as we get down to this time of year, as I have noticed in the eight years I've been here, yeah, we've got to start making decisions and setting priorities and I guess