

area that they grow up in, principally, those who grow up on farms and in small towns, in trying to attract those people back because they grew up in those areas. And, number two, family practitioners are probably the main people who are going to return to a rural practice. It's going to be difficult, as I said, to attract a medical specialist to locate in an area like Franklin or Ord or Atkinson or some of those areas, so I think this program is designed to try and bring family practitioners back to rural areas of our state that desperately need doctors. And I know Senator Rogers is in a good situation in Ord where they have a lot of doctors at this time. But within three to four or five years, I know when I was in Ord not long ago they were telling me, yeah, we're in a good situation today, but we have the chance at least of some of these people retiring, others moving away and we could be in a very desperate situation in a very short time. And with three hospitals closing last year in Nebraska, one of the major reasons that they closed was because they couldn't get doctors to locate there. This is one program that might be able to do something to help shore up our rural health needs in this state as I found them to be very important, in some cases very desperate, to respond to a rural health crisis that is beginning to escalate and I was not as appreciative of the problem until this year, I guess, as when I was at talking to people and last year we saw a pretty substantial problem that is only going to, I think, escalate if we don't do things at this legislative level to respond. So I thank Senator Baack for bringing the amendment and I'm going to support it.

**SPEAKER BARRETT:** The Chair recognizes Senator Hannibal.

**SENATOR HANNIBAL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I'm going to be offering some explanations as to why I won't support the amendment. I would like to correct Senator Schellpeper, at least if he implied that Senator Warner was rising in favor of the amendment and I don't think that he was. I believe that he was trying to explain the situation and trying to be somewhat diplomatic, I believe, for some obvious reasons. But the issue really, as far as I understand the issue and how it came to committee and I do understand Senator Baack's position, but the issue is not really whether we are going to have more doctors practicing in the rural areas of the state as much as it is who is making the contribution to the, in this case, the Lincoln Medical Education Foundation. And I also am in favor of making sure we have a good supply of physicians