

practicing in rural parts of Nebraska. Senator Warner did point out that we have several programs doing that already with the tuition credits that we have going on, with the Medical Center's program going on in Omaha, along with the Lincoln Medical Education Foundation. Those programs are all doing things, also augmented just recently by the agreement between the Medical Center and Chadron to provide slots for undergraduates to come in, have top priority with the Medical Center, go back to the rural areas, Chadron areas or other rural areas in the state and practice. All these things are good ideas, all these things do merit support. This particular amendment, however, goes just a step further. The original bill, LB 1031, does, as Senator Baack pointed out, does comply, if you will, with the commitment that the Medical Center made to the Lincoln Educational, Medical Education Foundation because of some language we did last year that would have taken all the funds out of the Med Center's budget and they have come to an agreement with the Education Foundation to handle part of this. But Senator Baack is suggesting he is going to bring some more funds in to handle it all. Well, what does this mean? What it means is that the Lincoln area hospitals have been dropping their contribution to the program. Now the Omaha area hospitals have been continuing their support for the program and the question is whether the Lincoln Medical Education Foundation needs the funds from the Lincoln hospitals, their contribution of these funds, or whether we're going to have the state pick up that area that formerly Lincoln area hospitals have been contributing to. That's the issue. Do you want state funds to replace the funds that the area hospitals have been contributing? Now to my mind, I don't know that that is necessary. I don't think it's necessary to have state General Funds take the place of the contribution of the Lincoln area hospitals. There are some reasons why maybe it is harder for the Lincoln area hospitals to make this contribution. Business has been bad. I think that's the argument, business has been bad. I think you could point out some examples where if business is that bad, we have had some fairly significant operations going on in Lincoln, some fairly significant building expansions going on with some of the area hospitals that maybe it isn't quite as bad as we've been led to believe. I don't know that. I'm not suggesting anything except I think the issue is, do you want state General Fund dollars to replace the commitment that the Lincoln area hospitals have been making over the last few years? These house officers which are sometimes called residents, sometimes called interns...