

things that I would point out about the provisions that we envision the way this would work is, if anything, this, through the encouragement of such things as interlocal agreements, probably enhances more regional agreements. Many communities now are realizing that something that happens down the road is good for them in the rural area, and so I think this opens the door for that and maybe it actually brings about more cooperation among communities in this state. But if you live along a state line anywhere, you have to be very much aware of what's going on across that state line, whether it's a small manufacturing effort. There are a couple of things we're in competition with out there right now that I would prefer just not to bring up at this point, but they're there. The competition is very real and, you know, who can say what's going to make the difference? And so the constitutional provisions are really what we need to be concerned about here in terms of just tying our communities' hands in Nebraska with restrictions that the surrounding states, quite frankly, don't have to deal with. And we're all rural states. We're all out there fighting for our lives. The future of rural America doesn't exactly look bright and shiny unless we do some things to make sure that Nebraska is competitive. I might point out that New Horizons has recognized the need to do this. So basically we're giving our state, our communities in our state a fair shot that is no different than what our neighboring states already have the advantage of having.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Scofield, your light is next. Would you care to make any other comments?

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Well, I guess I would just... I would just continue here, Mr. Speaker. I would urge that if this motion isn't pulled that we defeat it and go ahead and move it. It is... it has been unfairly, I think, compared with some tax incentive legislation that was passed a few years ago and, frankly, this is an entirely different kind of proposition. It's one of the most important pieces of legislation that we're dealing with right now in terms of giving our small communities in this state an opportunity to get out there and do some good things for their future. And I think most people in here recognize that the big towns and the little towns all depend on each other. There is not an imaginary wall between the metropolitan part of this state and the rest of the state; that they very much are dependent on our welfare to continue and this is an important tool to the future of small cities and I would