

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Conway, would you care to introduce the resolution?

SENATOR CONWAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members, this proposal called the wayports, on your desk you will find a brief scenario in terms of what are they and what they may do. I ran across the concept at a national meeting a year ago. Much to my surprise, it has picked up speed and we now have as many as nine different states and communities that have expressed interest in this. Basically, the concept is a proposal that is in front of Congress right now. There is a House bill as well as a Senate bill that is proposing the possibility of between four and six so-called wayports. And a wayport really is nothing more than if one wanted to conceptualize what goes on now in Chicago and Atlanta and St. Louis in terms of those being major airline hubs and all of the difficulty and concern that you have heard from the FAA and the like with respect to traffic and congestion and the like. There has been a suggestion made that the federal government support the building of somewhere between four and six of these so-called wayports and they would be out in rural areas out where you do not have the traffic congestion in terms of airline traffic, where their sole purpose really is to move freight and passengers in a much more expedient manner. They could be built considerably cheaper with cheaper land than trying to reconstruct an older airport in the city for that nature without the traffic and the like. And the idea is starting to catch on and I found in several cases that people in other rural states are talking about it. There is a proposal offered out of Kansas. North Dakota has already passed a resolution and I think that Nebraska, with our abundant air space, our central location, would be a very viable location for the federal government to look at the possible placement of one of these airports. They are talking about an expenditure in the neighborhood of around a billion dollars to build each one of these wayports or massive transfer airports. Nebraska, I believe, would be an ideal location by virtue of the location itself, but also I think we, through economic development, have flaunted and promoted all kinds of other advantages for enterprise to be in Nebraska. That, with our location, specifically, would make us a major contender. What this resolution basically suggests is that the Department of Aeronautics and the Department of Economic Development work together and look at the possibility of a proposal that could be forwarded to Washington to say, hey, look us over, we think we have something to offer here and we would be a proper location