

isn't getting them into our real critical areas, and this bill would do that. But I think the best thing about the bill, like I said, there is no fiscal note on the bill. I wish we had some more funds, we'd have a lot of different entities of the health care profession that would like to be part of this bill, because it's a way to get people out into rural areas. But we just don't have the funds to do that. We're going to use existing funds we have right now with the Rural Health Manpower Commission, and that's how we'll get the doctors out there at the present time. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Schellpeper. I'll now recognize Senator Wesely, followed by Senator Dierks. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Madam President. Members, I rise in support of LB 400 and commend Senator Schellpeper for the good work he did on the legislation, as well as Senator Dierks and Senator Rogers particularly have worked hard on trying to recognize the needs of rural health care in Nebraska. A couple of points, just real briefly. The Rural Health Manpower Commission, when it was first adopted back in the seventies, mid-seventies, Tom Kennedy, Senator from Norfolk, took the lead on that issue. We always extended it for a few years, and then had to come in with a bill and extend it some more, and extend it some more. This bill doesn't have any of the sunset provisions of that Rural Health Manpower Commission, because we finally recognize the rural health personnel issue is one that will never go away, it's always going to be a problem, we're constantly going to have to be working to try and deal with it, and we might as well just recognize that we can't solve it on a short-term basis. It's a long-term issue that we need to constantly, consistently attempt to address. So this initiative, brought to us by Senator Schellpeper, will, I think, dramatically change some of the short-term thinking on this issue and resolve some of the problems that we've had in a way that should provide for a long-term solution, at least in the areas in which this bill will be able to have an impact. One of the things we should note is that at the hearing a number of individuals came forward and liked to expand the concept of the bill to include other types of professions, other health professionals that are in need...we're in need of in rural Nebraska. And I may be coming back, I'm going to have to talk to Senator Schellpeper about this, with the osteopaths, and there may be some others in future years that may be coming