

SPEAKER BAACK: The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I do. We will now vote on ceasing debate. All those in favor vote aye, opposed vote no. We are voting on ceasing debate on the Hall amendment. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 26 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, to cease debate.

SPEAKER BAACK: Debate has ceased. Senator Hall, would you like to close on your amendment?

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members, again, I rise in support of the amendment to the bill which does nothing more than this, it places a moratorium on construction for one year in Omaha and Lincoln. Omaha and Lincoln are the locations where the vast majority of hospitals are in this state, is where the construction has been booming, where there has been little or no cooperation on the issues that we're facing. They have continued to be put off, relegated for another day. That can no longer happen. All this amendment does is say, for one year we aren't going to increase the costs. For one year we're not going to put any more brick and mortar into the system. We're not going to add to the expenses of the individuals who go to these facilities for health care. It is not something that will be the ruin and doom of the health care industry. What it says is, come to the table and negotiate with us. If we walk out of this session in two days without having addressed this issue, we are putting ourselves at a tremendous disadvantage when we sit down over the interim and talk to these folks, tremendous disadvantage. The lawsuit will still be pending. We will have no hammer at the table. We will have expense after expense involved in a lawsuit in terms of expensive discovery on both sides of the issue, ours that we have to pay in order to follow through, theirs that they will be able to pay like a for-profit operation. It's built into their budget just like their advertising schedules are. All you have to do is turn on the radio when you're driving through Omaha. It's amazing that these not-for-profit operations have the ability to spend as much money as they do competing for business against one another, but yet when it comes to paying taxes or to curtailing their construction budgets that doesn't seem to be a problem. That's never an issue. That's good for the public. That's good for the health care system. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I would argue that a moratorium for one year in Omaha and Lincoln on construction is extremely good for the public, it's extremely