

the cuts at the federal level, we didn't have the funding that we thought we'd have, and to finish the job we've got to step in and continue forward. It is not a lot to spend on a very, very important problem, that being the trauma system that we have in our state. I've had passed out for you some summary of it, what it does. I'd be happy to answer any questions, but, again, to me this is vital, and those of you who recall the issue in the Health Committee and on the floor last year, this is...this is very necessary to finish the job that we began, and I think a lot of lives are at stake with this vote. I would ask for your support for the amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Wickersham.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Thank you, Madam President. I will be brief. I do just want briefly to state that I support the amendment. In part, Senator Wesely has already talked about what the necessity is with regard to the trauma care network. There are a couple of things that I would like to add. A component of a true trauma care system includes prevention. It is not only the flashing lights, the sirens, the high-speed drives down the highway, but it is also a component that is prevention, and another very important component is a network of hospitals. These trauma care networks are developed with various levels of care that each one in the system can provide, and it is the objective to bring patients through that system in an orderly and timely fashion, which is absolutely critical to their care. And I was one of the sponsors of the bill to promote the study, and I believe it will result in significant benefits for us if it is allowed to be completed. I am somewhat chagrined that in order to find the funding, we are asked to cut another program which I think extends important benefits through the nursing incentive program. However, if it is necessary to have a trade-off for this year in order to keep the trauma care bill going forward, I will support the funding that is being provided through the Brashear amendment, and, hopefully, we will revisit the issue of funding for the nursing incentive program next year. I don't think there is that many dollars involved, and we should be able, quite frankly, to support both programs. But I realize now is not the time to bring the arguments in support of the nursing incentive program. I think we can do that next year. But, in the meantime, we do need to support this amendment, which will complete the trauma care network plan and bring a report to us for action later on. Thank you.