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number of people. One of the assets that we have in the state of Nebraska is the employees of the state regional centers. Now over time, at least the last four or five years, a lot of those people, because of uncertainty, have left and, with them, left the ability to staff some of these community services that we now will need. Each one of these people carry a unique set of experiences, unique capabilities, and we know up-front that they are qualified. In most cases, they are not only very well qualified, they are also very dedicated to doing the type of work that they're doing. I think that these are people we cannot afford to have away from us in this problem, in this project, in this field. Nebraska is like a number of other states where we have lots and lots of square miles, one or two large population centers, and long distances in between. One of the problems that has been suffered by most of outstate Nebraska is finding people willing to be in outstate Nebraska. Community services in some of these areas are going to be very difficult. We've had people say, well, you know, it's a long drive. It's 125 miles from Omaha to Norfolk. It's 100 and...more than that, 140, I suppose, out to Hastings. It's 56 or 60 miles to Lincoln. And that's a terrible, terrible distance to have to travel, I don't think. When I was living in Rapid City many years ago, I used to go to Belle Fourche, 63 miles, because the beer tasted better there. Miles are not a great factor in outstate Nebraska, but evidently they're a large factor in the metropolitan and in the primary city. But we have just as much need in outstate Nebraska as we do in Omaha and in Lincoln. I think that this is a good amendment. I ask for your support of it and I ask for your vote. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Tyson. You've heard the opening on AM1415, which is an amendment offered by Senator Tyson to LB 724. Open for discussion on that amendment. Senator Jensen, followed by Senator Johnson and Stuthman. Senator Jensen.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, I do rise in opposition, as I said I would, to this amendment also. Last year, beginning midsummer, we had a Medicaid task force and we asked for individuals who would like to serve on that task force. When we got the number back we had