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businesses. They help support rural development. They bring people to the table that haven't been brought to the table. So I am open to Senator Schimek's criticism of this how...who gets appointed, but we need to make sure that the structure is there so that they're independent, at least somewhat independent, and they fit within the federal guidelines. I support the Chambers clarification amendment and the Chambers amendment.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Connealy. Senator Baker, on the Chambers amendment to the amendment.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, President Cudaback and members. I'm a rural senator, very rural. I'm going to oppose this whole scenario here and I'll tell you why. I have a dear friend who heads the Rural Development Commission, a former constituent from Holbrook, good fellow. It sounds a little bit like he is a bit hesitant here, from what Senator Schimek said, about even trying to do this. They're independent. I think the flap came about over a grant issue. I've not talked to him. If he's out there, I'm going to try and run him down. But I oppose this whole thing. I've worked extensively with the Department of Economic Development on an ethanol project out in my district. I'll be honest with you. They've been most helpful. They've spent a lot of time, effort, money. We've landed the project. It's being built as I speak today, and they've done an excellent job. That's through the Department of Economic Development. They're out there and they're working; they're doing their job and they're doing it well. What we're trying to do here is dilute the effort. We're not trying to consolidate our effort. We're going to say, oh, DED is doing one thing, the Rural Development Commission is out here doing another, and we dilute our efforts. What we need to be doing is consolidating our efforts, not diluting them. And that's just exactly what we're doing, we're diluting them by trying to pass this bill. I think it's false hope. To be honest with you, it never occurred to me to talk to the Rural Development Commission when working on the ethanol project out there. Maybe I should have. But I think by saying, well, we're going to reestablish this as a state agency, it's a disservice to rural Nebraska. The people are out there now to help us in rural Nebraska. The programs are there. The personnel is there. We've worked on a community development