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Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

March 14, 2006      LB 1060

SENATOR SCHIMEK:      Yes, thank you, Mr. President and members. I've seen other people do this before on bills that they thought did not get adequate debate. I rarely use it, but I really think that we need more debate on this. Did you see the number of red lights up there? It's not a really good idea to railroad the vote, I don't think, and so I ask your indulgence. I don't think everything that's been said on this floor has accurately projected what may happen, if this amendment is adopted, and one of the things that I have available, and I think maybe some of the rest of you do, too, is the testimony that was given at the committee hearing on this bill, and they were from all over the state. And the general gist of it--I'm going to read some of it--but the general gist of it is that you are going to dilute these funds, because many of the funds will go to places that really don't have the facilities or the personnel or the contact with the community that others do. So I'd first like to read to you from the executive director of the Hastings Family Planning in Hastings, Nebraska. And she says that the Hastings Family Planning relies on the funding that they receive from the state to defray costs of operation. Running a quality medical facility requires specialized equipment, highly trained medical and nursing staff, laboratory services, and local physicians willing to act as consultants for the myriad of problems arising from diagnosis and treatment of abnormal cervical Pap smears and sexually transmitted diseases. As a taxpayer, I would not support spending precious and strained resources--we've already mentioned that here today--to needlessly move these services to another provider. The cost of reestablishing clinical services, medical equipment, staff training, rent, advertising, et cetera, is poor use of taxpayers' dollars. Medical clinics are required to have state inspections, clinic licenses, laboratory inspections, and certifications, as well as other requirements, costly again to the state. As a state, we have many pressing problems that require our time, attention, and funds. We should not be duplicating any services or reinventing the wheel. It also seems irresponsible and unfair to add another barrier to access to quality healthcare. Splintering services or offering partial services at disparate locations is not the answer. I would like to read to you from the woman from Scottsbluff, Nebraska. She says, I'm a registered nurse of 31 years. For