

New York City and work these arrangements out over the telephone. But the public bodies should remain in the state to provide public input into their decision-making. So I rise in support of what I view as a very noncontroversial amendment and what I feel should have been in the statute in the first place.

PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Abboud. May we have order in the Chamber, please. (Gavel.) Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. The only thing I would say is I merely wonder if these board of examiners that meet have ever heard of a long distance conference call. It is a lot cheaper than an airplane and a \$150 a night motel room. You can do those internationally, as well as statewide, nationally, or whatever. When we are being asked to cut the budget, cut the budget, cut the budget, and then we hear of these little board of examiners going to where was it, Senator Haberman? Hawaii? San Antonio, Texas, to hold their meeting, this Board of Examiners, as I understand it was the doctors...the physicians assistants. I just question if a lot of these meetings that state officials go to, if the same thing couldn't be accomplished with a long distance telephone call set up among all the various interested parties. When it comes to within our own state, I agree that when any board of examiners meets to make an official decision it should be within this state and not outside of it. But I'm beginning to think that the travel expenses are getting so high for the commissions, the boards, government agencies, etc., etc., no wonder we have the deficits and the cost that we do of government. While I'm not in love with any telephone company, I do think that they ought to consider these conference calls and the money it would save. I know I, myself, have done it. My first year here, when I kept getting the ping-pong game played with the Department of Social Services when Douglas County held it...had charge of it and Nebraska had charge of it. Douglas County would say, well, that is the state's part, Senator, and I'd go to the State Department of Social Services and they'd say, oh, no, that's Douglas County. It finally took a conference call to get the state on the line, to get the county on the line, and to get the third person who was involved in this problem, and me, and then one of the two. I forget whether it was the state or the county because this was four years ago, admitted, oh, yes, you are right, it is our responsibility. Now what if I had said