

Okay, later he can.

SPEAKER BAACK: His light is on, Senator Moore, so he may speak to those later. Senator Peterson. Senator Peterson.

SENATOR PETERSON: Mr. Speaker and members, I rise to support this bill. I think it has got some merit. I don't want the state, I will make it very plain, to be in the railroad business, but I think we should move this bill over, and if the time comes down the road, if we can't get everything together, then I think it is time to do anything, but I think to just delay this bill and that, I think we should move it over and do whatever we can. And we have had numerous meetings in that regard with people, short line people, that are interested. I think we should do all we can to help these people on lease-purchase or some kind of agreement to get this railroad up and going because I think it would be a big asset and be a potential for a lot of increase in traffic up there. I don't know...one thing and it hasn't been mentioned, I believe, in the debate is if this railroad is continued and made viable, there is a great potential for a potato plant to be up there, and I would guess from the information that I have heard, they would not be coming to Nebraska definitely if there was not some rail service. So I think we should be cautious but I know that some of them that use the rail now are committed to putting up a few bucks of their own to help out, and so I think we are...a number of you have raised a lot of caution lights here and I think that is viable, but I think to not move the bill at this point and that we continue to talk to people and hopefully by the end, towards the end of the session that we will have something that we can come back with is what I am looking forward to. So I ask you to move the bill, and we will continue to work on it, and hopefully we can get this worked out. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Peterson. We will go to Senator Dierks.

SENATOR DIERKS: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I rise, of course, in support of this legislation. I, too, am one of the sponsors of the bill. This railroad that we are talking about today goes through two of my counties and we look on it as a very important economic development piece of legislation. Without it, we lose a tremendous amount of economic viability, and with it, we can maintain most and if not more of our economic potential. Senator Wickersham has been very forthright