

man, Tom Foley, spoke to me on the floor and said he wanted to be here to personally introduce you to the committee and regrets he cannot be. He is in committee himself.

STATEMENT OF DR. AMOS BRATRUE, WASHINGTON MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, AND ASSOCIATION OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Dr. BRATRUE. I was sent here today by the Washington Medical Association, and I have the blessing of the Association of General Practitioners.

I am Dr. Amos P. Bratrue and am in general practice in Omak, Wash. I have a common failing with all people who have moved West, and that is our adopted home has become very important to us, and so you'll excuse me if I give you a few words about Omak. It is a rather typical western community of about 4,500 people. The prime industries are logging, apple orchards, and cattle. The biggest single event of the year is the Omak stampede with what we consider, a world-famous suicide race. It is a nice community and my 9 years there have been very pleasurable. I am married and have four children, and as a father am beginning to experience the rigors of a teenage daughter.

I was raised in the Middle West. My father was a general practitioner in a small town by the name of Antioch, Ill. Upon deciding where to practice, there were several things I was sure that I wanted.

I wanted a community with a hospital in it. I have always been very interested in general practice but could see no reason to choose a community that was large enough to have a well established specialist group. I wanted to choose a community that I felt had some promise of growth so that I could eventually have the type of medical practice that I was interested in. This; namely, is a group of three, four, or five doctors who are quite interested in the practice of medicine, but also want to be free to pursue academic and recreational activities. I am now the senior man of a four-man group, and the reason that I can be here today is that I have three excellent partners that are covering for me.

Those were the practical reasons for choosing Omak. The emotional ones are that the country just immediately appealed to me. I enjoy hunting and fishing and being outside, and all these things were available. We have been 15 months in a new hospital with 32 beds, and a staff of seven physicians. Of course, four of these are of our group. It is quite interesting to me to go to various meetings and seminars and hear people discuss the problems of a small hospital. Invariably these people consider anything from 100 to 150 beds to be a small hospital. Consequently, their discussions of problems that might occur there have no bearing at all on what happens in a hospital of 32 beds. I had always been quite interested in the broader problems of medicine, and when the opportunity came to me from the Washington-Alaska regional medical program I welcomed it.

I would be the first to admit that I had a rather biased viewpoint when I joined the Washington-Alaska regional medical program board. I had been raised of fairly conservative parentage and had a decidedly jaundiced opinion of the role I thought Government was playing in medicine. It is quite surprising to find out at the first advisory com-