

Senator Wesely, Senator Jacobson.

SENATOR JACOBSON: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I rise to give a brief report and a boost to the amendment by Richard Peterson. What this will do would be delete Hastings and Lincoln regional centers and mental health centers from the bill. They are happy. They don't want to be in the bill. It's affects the Mental Health Center at Norfolk only and I suggest that we pass this amendment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Rod Johnson. No. Is there further discussion? Senator Richard Peterson, do you wish to add anymore? To your amendment?

SENATOR RICHARD PETERSON: No, I just ask for its adoption.

PRESIDENT: Motion is the adoption of the Peterson amendments to LB 583. All those in favor vote aye, opposed vote no. Have you all voted? Clerk will record.

CLERK: 31 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on adoption of Senator Peterson's amendment.

PRESIDENT: Amendments are adopted. Senator Peterson.

SENATOR RICHARD PETERSON: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, the Community Mental Health Services Act as enacted in 1974 included a very broad statutorial purpose authorizing the six regional boards to establish community centers with a major stipulation being that they **furthered** mental health. I have no disagreement with the purpose of the act itself but I do see a necessity in creating a higher authority than the regional boards which LB 583 is intended to do. I think it is important to recognize that the Comprehensive Mental Health, Community Mental Health Services are extensions of a State agency and are funded for the most part by State money, yet they exist as autonomous independent entities wholly separate from the State involvement. There's no question that the services provided are necessary and positive. The only issue here is unlimited power and authority that the regional boards are allowed to wield in administration of these State funded programs. As a short-term goal, I see LB 583 as reinstating a relative degree of authority to the State level by vesting with the Director of Medical Services the discretionary power to withhold funding, if in fact, services are duplicated within a particular geographic proximity. As a long-term goal, I see that LB 583 will reinforce the notion that community based centers are within the jurisdiction of the boards and the State and it will assure a more integrated and comprehensive program that will be more efficient method of meeting