

but to the state ombudsman in general and when that information is provided there is provisions that no retaliation occur back to the resident or to the employee of the nursing home who has come forward and provided honest information. This of course is of concern that if an individual is unhappy in a nursing home and other situation and complains and will have then their treatment only made worse? And so this would make it clear that, no, we're not going to tolerate that and your license could be jeopardized if you took such action. In addition the bill makes it clear that if the circumstance involved is a serious one, the volunteer will defer up to the state ombudsman to have their intervention on the more serious matters and also even the state ombudsman on the charges of abuse or neglect or otherwise, mistreatment of the adults to the degree that it is necessary that adult protective services would be contacted, that is what we have in place to deal with those kind of matters and this doesn't duplicate that. It attempts to, if there is a problem, reference it over to that program. And again, also, if a complainant doesn't have their complaint investigated, they would be informed of that. They just won't sit idly by but we require the ombudsman program to let them know no, we're not going to look into that complaint so that at least they know if something is going to happen or nothing is going to happen. The concept in body here, I now summarize the essence of the amendment, the concept in body here is that we have the ability to reach out to more individuals at minimal or no cost by utilizing volunteers, that we have elderly individuals who are healthy and able and willing to try and serve those elderly among our state that are unable to speak out for themselves, that are vulnerable and in home situations and may have problems that they need to resolve. By and large, what we find is that this voice that is given to these vulnerable adults is one that is a compromising one that says, goes to the nursing home and says this person having trouble in this particular area, they don't like this or they don't like that, could you find a way to resolve it? And they serve, an ombudsman role is to try and take the two parties that have a difference of opinion and resolve the problem in a very positive fashion and we've been able, I think, to have success with that here in Lincoln and we think other parts of the state should and could benefit from the program. We don't require it, but we think it ought to be offered as an option. We don't see it as anything more than a problem solving initiative, but also the chance to find problems before they get worse, to take a problem at a stage where it is not a big issue and take care of it before it grows and festers