

Mr. President.

SENATOR WARNER PRESIDING

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature. As a cosponsor of LB 1099, I feel very strongly of what the bill consists of and I also believe we need to educate the citizens of Nebraska exactly the dire need of bone marrow donors and I believe that until it touches a member of your family, a friend or a neighbor, then you...up until about a year ago I didn't realize the sorrow and frustration of any family trying to match the bone marrow to a loved one. We need to encourage, as an example, employers to have a paid leave of absence for bone marrow donors and I believe the figures is about 440,000 Americans will be diagnosed as cancer in 1992, and the names that are registered as a bone marrow donor only amounts to 440,000, yet over 1 million Americans will be diagnosed as having cancer. The bone marrow transplants in Omaha at the Med Center is really expanding and they're most highly regarded in the country for having the best teams in the country to perform bone marrow transplants. The people that I met from across the country that come from other states to Omaha are really, really appreciative of the type of procedure and the type of...the teams that we do have at the Med Center that perform bone marrow transplants. I think we have two problems in this state, and probably in the whole country, is to be able to find a matching donor and, number two, would be the small number of donors. Many of us have signed the backs of our driver's license indicating that...our willingness to donate vital organs, but a donation of bone marrow is equally as important because I think it also means that it is a gift of life, so I urge the members of this body to support LB 1099 and let's get a drive started in the State of Nebraska for bone marrow donors, and think of the people, the families, and especially the young girl that passed away in Senator Withem's res...I think it was Papillion. It was a very sad case where she waited and waited for the young girl to be able to have a bone marrow transplant and before they could even find the matching blood, bone marrow, why, the young girl died. So until it reaches your family, your friends or someone in your neighborhood, you don't know how vitally important LB 1099 is, so I urge you to vote for the committee amendments and also the advancement of the bill.