

legislation, how it did work, what the relationship was with certified speech pathologists, what the relationship was with doctor referrals. It's all in there and it's all explained in terms of how it would function. You were all invited to a briefing in the first two weeks of this session to find out what was going on with this piece of legislation. You were all given the yellow folder with information in it and I suspect that many of you were also called by constituents that offered to be available to answer any questions you have had. This is not a new idea that just suddenly came up last week. It certainly isn't new to the special ed directors. They have had five years of opportunity to be involved with this process and to understand the billing system, the relationship with speech therapists and speech pathologists, as well as doctors, and many other things that they brought up to Senator Robinson last Thursday. They all were contacted individually by the accounting firm a year ago to get their concerns. They were all sent this same report six months ago about what was going on with this project. There have been a multitude of meetings across this state. I, myself, have gone to 30 of them in Scottsbluff, Kearney, Grand Island, Lincoln, Omaha, Mahoney Park, wherever there were more than three "SPED" directors gathered together, we were there to answer questions about this legislation. There were those "SPED" directors who, for whatever reasons, and may be legitimate, who chose not to be involved in this process, who chose not to go to those meetings or perhaps even today are choosing not to hear the answers to the questions. Many of you have on your desk a series of questions that was given to me as well as to Senator Robinson last Thursday and Friday by a handful of special ed directors...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: ...and I want you to know that the answers to those questions have also been given to you on this yellow sheet of paper. A meeting was offered with those four or five "SPED" directors on Monday of this week which they did not take up that offer to meet with other people. Senator Robinson said yesterday, go back and ask your constituents. He said his constituents were more concerned about dollars for roads and highways than they were about support systems for families. That may be true in his district but I want you to know that polls across this nation, even today when money is tight, indicate that the overwhelming number of people if asked, do we want to put dollars into the health care, into family support