

SENATOR WARNER: ...seems to me, a few years ago. But that's a federal guideline?

SENATOR WESELY: Originally...originally we passed legislation that increased the amount, the federal government then passed legislation a year or so later that pretty much mirrored that, and we had to make a slight adjustment. But...but what figures we have here are totally the federal levels and that's where they come from.

SENATOR WARNER: Do you know, can the state have higher than that, than the 60?

SENATOR WESELY: Well, I don't think so, but I know that at one point we were able to pass the state legislation that allowed us to go higher. But I think that was under a waiver provision or something. So I don't think we can do that anymore. At one point we could, that got changed and the federal change occurred and the increase was made.

SENATOR WARNER: Fine, I have no problem with the bill. But 60,000 now a days is not very much for the surviving spouse, at 4 percent, 5 percent interest it doesn't leave them much. So it seems to me it's appropriate to do, but somewhere along the line that individual who is not in the nursing home, seems to me you ought to leave them a little something more to live on for their... but you can't, obviously, with the federal requirements.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Warner. Senator Wesely, did you wish to speak again?

SENATOR WESELY: Yes. Mr. Speaker, members, Senator Bromm, in answer to your concerns, particularly on the long-term care insurance, if you look on page 5 of the one handout that we have on the health and human services consideration of bills, that's a different handout, page 5 of that references LB 797, that's a bill dealing with long-term care insurance. The way to address your particular problem, I think, is to look at that bill, and we plan to do that over the interim, because what that would allow us to do is waive the asset spend-down. If you are able to access long-term care insurance then for 3 years at 30,000, let's say a \$100,000 policy, we would have you do that. And then you would be able to retain assets up to that level so that