

PRESIDENT MOUL: LR 273 is adopted.

CLERK: Madam President, I have a new resolution, LR 275, offered by Senators Rasmussen and Wesely. In order to consider it today, the Legislature would, Senator Rasmussen would move to suspend Rule 4, Section 6 so as to permit consideration of the resolution today. (LR 275 appears on page 2854 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Rasmussen.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: Madam President and members of the body, I sense that no one wants this wonderful experience to come to an end, so I'd like to move that we suspend the rules so we can do one more resolution. Actually, I apologize for prolonging the process, but this resolution is regarding the amendment that I proposed with a medically needy caretaker program. It was the concept of establishing a sliding fee scale as a way to help cover the cost so that we could continue with this program. Since that, the medically needy caretaker program failed to get reinstated I have spent some time discussing with the department and others to try and see whether or not this is an idea that we could do and it is evident from existing rules and regs that you can establish a sliding fee scale. However, you can only do it with those who are required to spend down their assets to qualify this program and that is only about 300 of the 5,000 families that were in this program. So for that reason I thought that a resolution to get us moving on this would be important to do this year so that we could begin to look over the interim at the possibility of establishing a sliding fee scale that would not be tied to existing rules and regs that possibly require a waiver from the federal government to promote the policy of if people can afford to pay something for this health insurance, they could and should. So this resolution simply says that we should direct the Department of Social Services to examine the possibility of a sliding fee scale, not being constrained by existing rules and regs for the purpose of establishing a means of reinstating the medically needy caretaker relative program and that furthermore that our congressional representatives would be directed to support in whatever way they could if that meant that we needed to require a waiver to do so. So I would respectfully request that you support move to support the rules so that we can move on this resolution this year. Thank you.