

Now I know that there may be some concern about just how much the costs are versus nursing homes and this. Now I am not saying that people should not be placed in nursing homes. There are many times that that is the only alternative but the third point that we discovered in our hearings is that oftentimes there is no alternative in a community and, therefore, the more expensive choice is made. Now the State of Nebraska increase as far as nursing home costs between '79-'80 and '80-'81, the cost of our share of the nursing home portion of Medicaid was from 13 million this year to almost 17 million next year. That is a 4 million dollar increase in one year because people are in nursing homes. The increase in the cost to the county, and I think Senator Kahle with LB 39 recognizes the cost to a county of Medicaid and nursing home care, is an additional 1.9 million dollars. Through LB 404 we can provide an alternative to keep people in the community in their home at a lower cost. If the state is increasing 7 million this year in nursing home costs and if the counties are increasing 2 million, that is a 9 million dollar increase in one year. If we can keep some of those people in their community for the cost of LB 404, then we have saved money for the state and local government. It is for that reason again, that county officials, conservative local officials came and said, we have seen a difference in our community. People do not have to be placed in nursing homes unnecessarily. It is saving us money. That is why we support these services. That is why we would ask you to join with us in providing. Those are the conclusions of our hearing, those three points. It is because of that that LB 404 was drafted and presented. It has been scaled back from the original concept but even in its current form it does establish something that is long overdue and that is a statement of policy and an explanation of the relationship between the local government, the state government and the federal government as far as provision of these services. Most of the counties that do not have services are outside of the urban areas across the state. 404 is designed to extend those services out to those communities but there no longer is a mandated date so the pace, the control will rest with us and the local areas as to how and when to extend those services. I would be glad to answer any questions on LB 404. I am sure that other members of the study committee will also be willing to discuss what they saw at the hearings across the state.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Maresh, do you wish to speak to the bill?

SENATOR MARESH: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I was a part of this study committee and we found that there were needs that are not met and I think this will carry out the goals that are written in