

May 7, 1981

LB 389

if he would respond, please. Senator Wesely, I have some of the same reservations and concerns that have been expressed by Senators Lamb and Haberman. We have a number of proposals that come before this body very frequently with the proposition being with establishment of new programs that we're going to be able to conserve and consolidate programs and conserve dollars. Now I would think with this proposition that you would have some idea of what the cost savings might be to the State of Nebraska with the enactment of this law over what is being expended in community programs at the present time to serve these people. Don, I am not attempting to be an obstructionist or to be critical, but I do have concerns about the new programs that we do establish because they have a great deal of merit from the societal standpoint but it costs additional dollars, and I am concerned when the federal dollars are being retracted that we as a state with initiation of new programs when we are attempting to either eliminate or consolidate programs to...I am a little reluctant to be supportive of a new concept not knowing what it is going to cost us subsequently.

SENATOR WESELY: Yes.

SENATOR STONEY: So is there any way that the Department could provide us with figures before this bill is considered on Final Reading that would give us some indication of the cost savings that we would have through consolidation?

SENATOR WESELY: Well, I know Senator Haberman has asked that question of the Department and I have too. I think we can estimate that it is going to be cost efficient and it's going to be, you know, everything points to the fact that we are going to save the state money really, at least to some degree, although the program is going to cost money, it's going to save money really in the long run. The problem is a number of factors and the Department can't give you a set figure at this point because, number one, we're not sure exactly how many people are going to be affected by this, how many people are going to serve. We have strict criteria as to who would qualify and they would have to go through a long process before we decide to even allow them to provide assistance through this program. And so that is why we set up a pilot project, Senator Stoney. It is a five year thing. They will take a look. They will better understand who needs this service and why they need the service and where we fall short. And after that period of time we will be very clear as to the benefits and the savings and the cost and that sort of thing. But I guess it is just so difficult because this is an area where we are not sure who is out there and who isn't getting served

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