

of the cost. And as far as I know, that is exactly what the sponsors of 125 say would be available. Now it is not the Appropriations Committee that has gotten into the business of deciding what is in and what is out of our state group health insurance bids. It was those that brought in 125 in previous legislation that started mandating specifications on this floor by saying, abortion shall not be part of that part of the insurance policy that is paid for with state dollars. That was the precedent breaking, Senator Dworak. This is not the precedent breaking today. This is merely the implementation of the legislation that you brought in. This in no way is a reversal of what was debated on 125. It is not a reversal of the position of this Legislature. It is a confirmation of the position that says that abortion coverage shall be available only if the employee pays one hundred percent of the cost. That's all the amendment says. It doesn't put a mandate on private enterprise. It simply puts responsibility on us and the state to fulfill the pledge that was made to people when LB 125 passed. So, Senator Cullan, it is not a reversal. It is not a contradiction. For that reason it came out of the Appropriations Committee as a rider simply to implement the bill that you supported.

SENATOR NICHOL: Senator Marsh.

SENATOR MARSH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At the time LB 125 was being discussed, both Senator Higgins and Senator Labeledz assured us that there would be coverage if an employee chose to pay for coverage for abortion from that employee's own dollars. What this amendment has quite successfully done is point up that what is said on the legislative floor is not necessarily fact, but an argument used to put forth one specific point of view at what cost to an employee. Abortion is a legal procedure under the Constitution of the United States but the legislation passed on this legislative floor, including LB 125, I continue to remind you is unconstitutional from the aspect that it prohibits a legal procedure. It has, in fact, the effect of prohibiting unless this amendment is adopted. If this amendment is adopted, it in fact will make 125 more constitutional than it currently is. I should be opposing the amendment brought in by the Appropriations Committee for I have no desire to make LB 125 a constitutional piece of legislation. Think just a moment, ladies and gentlemen, those of you who desire to make 125 in all probability have the ability to do so right now by voting for this amendment. What a quandry for me.

SENATOR CLARK PRESIDING

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Higgins.