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LB 561

We have a slowness. And I put out a pamphlet here earlier. If you will look at that you will find some very great people that were slow in some phase, yet they became great. And I do feel that we have to give these people an opportunity to be helpful. Several days ago you received a letter from Rollie Southwick from Beatrice. He is taking his child to Crete to one of the training centers of the regional programs. His child and my child were together in a private school, and when they got out of there, they had to find their own way. There was nothing available. Then the regional programs came into being. Today my son is almost self-supporting, and Rollie Southwick said that his girl is being helped tremendously. Now, I do feel that we owe this to our citizens who cannot help themselves. These citizens have been under everybody's magnifying glass. I feel that we as individuals should also be watching, but they are under several different license standards, and we need these funds to continue that type of licensing so that our group homes, where a lot of these individuals are staying, are kept up to those standards. We have heard in the last debate that some of these homes are questionable. Well, with these standards they should come up to regular standards, but we do need these funds to do this. I also served on an Ethics Committee for the Mentally...I don't even like to say Retarded, and I saw what some of these staff people go through, and I tell you, you never saw such dedicated people. It is difficult for them. And by being on that staff, we have cut some paper work because we could see that they were doing a tremendous amount of paper work which was unnecessary. But you do this by being a part of it. And this staff is going to be cut back. Now, Region 6 took the brunt of the cut-back. Even before the Governor vetoed it, they only got an increase of 2.3 percent because there were other regions in the State of Nebraska that were cut short in prior years and the Appropriations Committee felt that they did need that extra funds. So even though we do increase it, the Region 6 will not get what they really are required to have.

PRESIDENT: One minute, Senator Sieck.

SENATOR SIECK: Region 5, which I am a part of, I feel is doing a tremendous job, and one of the things they told me at the last meeting I attended, they have several group homes where there are three people in. They are going to put four people in those group homes with the same amount of staff in order to try to cut down expenses, so that they can serve more of our citizens because there