

public hearing this year. In regards to the amounts, the intensity or the direction of this bill, and I think the one area that is very substantively changed is the whole process for review. Senator Cullan argues we are going to do away with the bureaucracy and make the appeals..the process to a more court like or administrative process with nonpublic servants, therefore nonbureaucrats who will understand these issues and be able to gather all the information from all sources. That alone is in fact a substantive change in direction of the CON proposal and process. That alone is quite substantive. Now I think that one of the things that we have said many a time on this floor, especially early in the session, I think Senator Cullan's arguments may have been more eloquent if it was the last ten or fifteen days of this session but the time for bill introduction hasn't even passed, and if he does not want to offer another bill to clog up the process, the expense, and so forth, we have just amended this bill but there is time to have that committee hearing. There is time to ask people, the various insurance companies, the various individuals of this state that are concerned about this spiraling increase in health care costs that are basically making health care more of a luxury than ever at any other time in our history. Those people deserve an opportunity to speak to this issue, to talk to this issue, and to assess whether or not what Senator Cullan calls nonsubstantive amendment is in fact a major change in direction for CON. I think it is. I would support the Wesely proposal to send it back to committee. It is not unduly going to ruin or hurt or even scuttle the chances of legislation this year and for that reason it deserves that kind of public hearing. We would do it in many other situations. We have done it in numerous situations up to this date. I mean the fact that you can still introduce bills make this a ludicrous process. So I think if we are concerned about fairness at all, fairness is another hearing is in order. Senator Wesely's motion is in order and deserves your support. Thank you.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Cullan.

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, initially I would like to correct Senator Newell. Never did I say that these amendments were not substantive. Indeed they are, as is any amendment to certificate of need process that is more than just a mere technical clean up. These are substantive amendments but we deal with substantive amendments on the floor of this Legislature every day. I said that most of the amendments are similar to the concepts that were embodied in LB 378 and I believe that and I pointed out the areas where this issue is not similar to LB 378 but