

in Nebraska showing that they have tripled in the last twelve years. Senator Johnson in our debate a few days ago talked about the increase in the gross national product that is now going to health care. It has been very costly and it is increasing in cost and it is really getting out of hand. Certificate of need is the one real effort that we have made to try and deal with that important issue, to try and keep health care cost down. Below that is another article announcing St. Elizabeth's in-patient rates to raise 21%. Again another indication that health care costs are going up and then the next page, Omaha Hospital Charges Above U.S. Average, which comes from the White Paper. You will remember, please don't forget the controversy that raged this summer and fall about the Omaha White Paper out of the HSA there dealing with the fact that Omaha hospitals have got higher than average costs in their hospitals and for health care services and that their costs are going up tremendously and the people are getting very upset and this effort was undertaken in Omaha and there is now a real interest in that area to try and do something about health care costs. I think that sort of concern expressed in Omaha is soon going to be found throughout the state as they learn more and more about how health care costs are going out of hand, and when they figure out just how serious the problem is, and they will, they are going to ask, well, what are we doing about it, what are we trying to accomplish. And you are not able to answer with anything but the certificate of need and that has been weakened as much as Senator Cullan would like to have, then I think we are not representing the concerns of our constituents as they should be represented because they are very concerned about costs, health care costs, and the skyrocketing results that we have seen in the past few years. Certificate of need is not perfect and I think that there have been some problems that we can correct through some remedial legislation, but to gut the bill and to reduce its effectiveness as great as Senator Cullan is proposing I think is counterproductive and would just let what slim controls we now have open up the floodgates and we will see even greater increases in the future. I think in talking to some hospital administrators and nursing home people that they do support a concept of some sort of certificate of need because they realize that the old days of competition for new equipment and expansions, and empire building was really detrimental to the health care industry, and that it reached a point where the consumers were not going to take it any more and that is when CON came about.

SENATOR CLARK: You have one minute left.