

do then? Well then they call in somebody else to take care of that. Again, we the taxpayers are paying for an extra trauma team 24 hours a day for University Hospital and all five hospitals in Omaha are making the money off of it. I guess they got around the Certificate of Need by just entering into agreement with this helicopter service. Is it right? I heard the other day that one of the Senators here said that someone in their district used this helicopter service and it costs them \$1600. They could have gone to Europe for that. I am not saying we don't need it. St. Joseph Hospital has a helicopter service. I was told they charge \$365 an hour. The one that is being leased to the five hospitals charges \$500 an hour. At least that is what we were told this summer in a public hearing in Omaha. Now how did they get around this and why are we taxpayers paying 365 days a year, 24 hours a day for a doctor and a nurse to be kept at the University for the use of five hospitals and I just told you what the hospital charged for less than 24 hours, \$1,114. So the taxpayers are subsidizing the hospitals to make the profit. Think about these amendments, Senators. Don't let's go off half cocked. You are not going to be able to afford a hospital if we don't do something about this. And I say, let's leave it as it is and let's do an intensive study, I mean intensive study. Break it up. Appoint several committees to look at hospital cost care today, nursing home care costs.

PRESIDENT: You have half a minute, Senator.

SENATOR HIGGINS: But don't let's do this to ourselves. I mean we are putting the knife in our hearts. We are going to be dying at home and not being able to afford a hospital if we don't keep a Certificate of Need bill that has some teeth in it. Thank you, Senators.

PRESIDENT: Any further discussion on the Wesely amendment. Senator Cullan.

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I appreciate the comments that Senator Higgins has made this morning and the brief explanation of the amendments that Senator Wesely offered to us. I would like to clarify something as far as Senator Higgins' comments are concerned and I know Senator Higgins would be interested in this. I also share the concern that Senator Higgins and others have about the duplication of services in the State of Nebraska and so I inquired into the University of Nebraska Medical Center helicopter situation a little bit myself. I found out, in fact, that the Department of Health has told the Medical Center at least on two separate occasions