

talk first about the compromise itself. If, in fact, we say simply that those child care facilities that have five or more children must receive...must be regulated one way or the other by the Nebraska Department of Public Welfare, but those facilities that have...I assume it is less than five children are not regulated by the Nebraska Department of Public Welfare. We literally are excluding a group of children right now that are in the greatest need of protection, and they very simply are the infants. The current federal requirements with respect to the provision of care for infants, and by infants I mean children who are less than two years old, is that there be one caregiver for every four infants. Now it is very difficult for the Nebraska Department of Public Welfare to even assure itself that there is at least one care giver for every four infants when, in fact, this legislation doesn't even reach that small level of regulatory authorization. And I think that would be a fairly significant breach in the overall regulatory dike. But I would deal with an issue that I know has got to be troubling every member in this body and that issue is why should the State of Nebraska regulate child care at all? Isn't the care of children a parental responsibility and will not parents adequately police and monitor what happens in the homes that they place their children? Parents in the last analysis have got to be the best judge of who is caring for their children. That is the question that clearly goes through the minds of anyone who looks at child care. Well, I think the answer is very simple. Parents...in Nebraska a lot of parents are not very affluent and they do not make much money at their jobs, and their job hours sometimes are fairly irregular and difficult. And what that means is that with many parents it truly is catch as catch can in terms of finding somebody who will take care of their children while they are at work trying to make a living to stay alive and to support their family, and they really do have to look the other way at things they find occurring in a child care facility because that is all they have for their children. Now in Senator Johnson's District...in Senator Lowell Johnson's District a year ago the State Fire Marshal walked into an unlicensed facility that had 30 children supervised by an 11 year old child, and you say to yourself, well, why would the parents put 30 children in a facility with an 11 year old child? Well, the reason why parents did that is parents didn't have very much money and it looked like it was a good facility and it was the only thing they could do under the circumstances. The Nebraska Department of Public Welfare has gone into facilities where they have