

February 8, 1982

LB 635

state funds. I think if they want state funds they ought to make the commitment with tax dollars that every other region in the state makes. I don't think we ought to perpetuate a situation where one region of the state can contribute less than half of the per capita tax dollars for the support of this program than other parts of the state. I urge you not to raise LB 635 from committee. It was killed for good reasons. It should stay dead for good reasons.

SPEAKER MARVEL: The Chair recognizes Senator Hefner.

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President, members of the body, I have a question for Senator Cullan, if he will respond.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Cullan, do you yield?

SENATOR CULLAN: Yes, I will.

SENATOR HEFNER: Senator Cullan, how come there is so much difference in the cost per client in these various regions, like I see for...and I think you mentioned it, too...in Region I that for fiscal year 81-82 it would be \$1.49 and for Region III it would be 74¢, is that right, and Region IV 72¢?

SENATOR CULLAN: Senator Hefner, that is a good question. That is not actually cost per client. What that is is the amount of per capita local tax dollars which goes to support the regions, and you can see as you point out very clearly, it is more than twice, the taxpayers in western Nebraska contribute more than twice as much to the support of the mental health regions as they do in other parts of the state. And what Senator Kahle is attempting to do is freeze that by a maintenance of effort clause that is a part of LB 635.

SENATOR HEFNER: Okay, and then one more question, Senator Cullan, how much do you anticipate the fiscal impact to the state will be raised over the next several fiscal years?

SENATOR CULLAN: Well, LB 635 does not itself have a fiscal impact. The amount of money that the state appropriates to the mental health program is a function of the appropriations process but this would allow those regions that have not made a significant tax contribution in this area to obtain larger portions of funding. So if the people in western Nebraska, for example, who have been wanting to support mental health to the tune of \$1.49 a citizen, want to continue that same level of service, they are going to have to increase their taxes even more because some of those