

Goodrich and I had a bill about four or five years ago which we had hoped to take it down to from 20% to 10%. Well that was chopped down a bit and we did get from 20 to 18 to 16% and last year I carried a bill which again we attempted to take it down to 10% and it was chopped down to only a one year program and we took it down to 10%. So the counties now are paying 14% of the medical vendor payments. The other day when the bill came up and the day it was written it would have been phased out over a seven year period of time and I objected to this. I think that if you're going to cut the dog's tail off you should cut it off in one chunk and not just one piece at a time. So I went along with the amendment that has been presented. I think it is a clear cut way of doing it. My philosophy of course is, and I want this for the record, that the state will not take over the program until it funds it and that is what the amendment says. Now should there be some finagling going on either in this session or next session to string out that payment over a period of years I would be very much opposed to it. So in good faith I have supported this amendment that as of July 1st, 1983 the welfare program that is now funded by counties will be completely funded by the state and the state would have complete authority to administer it. With that sort of promise and consent from this body, I would support LB 522 or the amendment that is before us on 522. I think we will have welfare directors and we will have county board members that will not be too thrilled about this. Many feel that they should have some control over the welfare program in the counties. You have heard us argue that they do not and I am convinced that they have very little if any, but we are concerned out in outstate Nebraska that if the state does take over the program we may lose some of the services we now have and we also may not have as good service as we have. But I am willing to take this chance. I think we are going to have to make some changes in the welfare program and even with the possibility of the federal government making some changes this may be very necessary that we transfer the welfare program entirely to the state. I think it would be much easier then should the federal government decide to take over part of it. So with that support the amendment to LB 522. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator VonMinden.

SENATOR VONMINDEN: Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I rise to oppose this amendment. I, along with Senator Kahle at one time, was a county commissioner and although I did too at the time was disgusted that we had to pay at one time 20% and on down to 14% now. But if we pass this amendment onto this bill we will lose entirely a control we have over welfare.