

SENATOR WIITALA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all I would like to say a word of thanks to the Public Health and Welfare Committee for working on LB 835 and getting it into its present shape. Basically it was my intent that every patient that was dismissed from a hospital receive an itemized bill and that is one of the reasons that I felt compelled to exempt the Department of Public Institutions because the fiscal impact to the state would be tremendous. Under the committee's amended version, there would be very little impact to any institution largely due to the fact that the itemization would be on the request of a patient. They would have to give a formal request. And so the tremendous amount of bookwork would not be present. Basically LB 835 provides for an itemized billing upon request of the patient and also third party payer, such as insurance carriers. The bill allows for detailed itemization for hospital expenses and, thereby, protects against mistakes like overcharges, double billings, mistaken charges. For the insurance companies, it allows them to ask on a continuous basis that the bills presented for them for purposes of payment of claims would be itemized thereby allowing them up front to recognize any mistakes rather than passing on those bills and then requesting for an itemization if they desired. I hope the body would see fit and adopt these amendments and advancing the bill as amended to Select File. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Burrows, did you want to talk on the committee amendments? All right, the question before the House then is the adoption of the committee amendments. All those in favor vote aye, opposed vote nay.

CLERK: Senator Clark voting yes.

SENATOR CLARK: Have you all voted on the committee amendments? Record the vote.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee amendments, Mr. President.

SENATOR CLARK: Committee amendments are adopted. Now on the bill, Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I do appreciate the support for this legislation that has been indicated by the Hospital Association. With the committee amendments we just adopted I think they are in agreement with the bill. I would just like to add that most hospitals do provide some itemized billing and I think that we are not concerned with those situations but there are some hospitals that do not, and in those situations it is