

Senator Cullan did propose LB 883, that was his bill, even though he supports the concept and probably in a general term of what we are trying to accomplish here with the Warner amendment or the committee amendment, I should say, nevertheless the committee hearing I thought was quite illuminating into the problems that are involved when trying to do what is being proposed by Senator Warner's amendment. What we are talking about here is the committee amendment to the bill. What they would have you believe is the Welfare Department could sit down and decide to cut back this or that benefit that is now optional under the federal Medicaid program. It would save us a lot of money. What we found in a lot of different cases was that these people would have to go to a doctor which would be more expensive perhaps to get the same sort of services that they could now get from a practitioner under the present statutes. So, in fact, it may not have the savings that are contended to be the case. In fact, it may cost more money. So, unless you properly approach the matter you can end up not saving money but rather costing money. So, it makes a lot of sense in my mind not to adopt on this floor an amendment to a bill that essentially bodies legislation that is being held by committee because it is too complex and too questionable to advance at this time. So, I would ask you please, don't under the guise of an appropriation effort to keep costs down, which I think we all want to do, adopt something that may not in fact accomplish that. But will in fact reduce services to people that may need it and for those that are still able to receive some of those services may cost the tax payer more money. It is a question of process at this point. No matter how you may feel about the issue, the process is this. Two bills were introduced. They went to Public Health Committee, we had hearings, there were problems with those bills, we held those bills and now an amendment is being offered to this. . . to the committee to this bill that would essentially accomplish what those bills we held were trying to do. So what Senator Cullan and I are trying to do is not allow that amendment to this bill and not allow that action to be taken on the floor. We think it is better to have the committee deal with that and come back next year. That is the concept. Do you want to have a process that we follow through the committee or do you want to use the appropriation bill here to accomplish something in a round-about fashion. I do think that there are real questionable arguments in favor of the amendment in the first place. As I said there may be more cost than savings in some cases, and I think that we have to look at that very carefully. So I would ask you to please support the Cullan amendment and not adopt the committee amendment in this regard.