

General File to Select. Thank you.

**SPEAKER BARRETT:** Thank you, Senator Lynch. Discussion.  
Senator Nelson, followed by Senator Labeledz.

**SENATOR NELSON:** Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I have certainly observed what, Senator Lynch's points that he has made, Senator Wesely has made, but I, personally, have some reservations on this bill. What I see coming down the pipeline, and we all have the same sincere desire and we see the deteriorating health care, and this supposedly helps us address that. None of us deny that outstate and so on the problem is serious and is going to get more serious, and I probably will support the bill on at least the first round. As Senator Lynch says, give it a chance to stand in line with the other health care bills and proposals that will be coming to us. In a day or so, I will be coming up with one, hopefully, to address the nursing shortage which is very, very severe out there, and with the current Medicaid and Medicare provisions will get worse. But I kind of look at this as every program that we have down here, we can justify its existence. I don't care whether it is ADC, whether it is health care, high-risk pregnancy, or whatever it is, social services programs, they usually...probably may return \$1 on four, and I am not saying that this might not do it, but I did a little bit of homework on the bill, and I find that the cities of Hastings, North Platte, and Kearney either have gone down to one person or have discontinued their department of health, and so I wonder, and I know it was for budget cuts and budget reasons, that if we are not asking to expand something and create more programs and more agencies that may or may not justify their cost. And Senator Lynch has a good point, let's probably not chop this bill down immediately, but in the light of that, my own city does happen to have a department of health, but I think that is about the outstate, the question what it was, well, we kind of like the bill, Arlene, because we may get some more business, but I am wondering in my own mind, and I hope that I can find some more information between now and Select File, whether or not that we can actually justify \$600,000 in starting and creating more agencies, but I know the need is there, I am not saying that. But I don't know if Senator Lynch would want to address the Kearney, the Hastings, the North Platte, why they discontinued theirs. I think it was budget reasons and maybe tied to energy, too. With that, thanks.