

as concerns by Senator Moore and Senator Schmit and to a certain extent, Senator Wesely, and I would like to try to at least augment the concerns or try to answer in some way. Senator Moore was talking about some issues that he had actually, not necessarily opposition, but more questions and I think they were good questions and we talked a little about them in committee and we have discussed them. One thing that I think was pointed out a little bit by Senator Lindsay, about occupancy rates, licensed bed rate, in that article that came out in the newspaper, and I'm not going to be judgmental on the newspaper. I think we can all draw our own conclusions as to whether the newspaper does do total justice at all times to everything that we do or say. As a matter of fact, I have a little example here of that in a newspaper article that was written a couple days ago on this issue that quoted me, or didn't actually quote me, but said, a simple little statement that said, Hannibal said he was not concerned by the \$20 million increase in the cost of the plan. Well, any of you that know me on the floor, we realize that I would not in my wildest dreams say I'm not concerned about a \$20 million increase in a proposal. But the newspaper did point out that story on hospital rates, on occupancy rates. I think it was somewhat explained and I think you've had a chance to hear that explanation by staff and officials of the University Med Center, that the important thing is, does the Med Center have underutilized beds and the question is, no, they...the answer is, no, they don't. The University Med Center is running at about 82 percent on average, 77, 82 percent on average of effective bed use and actually what that means is that they go to 100 percent at times and as a matter of fact they already have patients in Clarkson Hospital on any given day. I understand it could be 18 to 20 patients that they use Clarkson's beds for that purpose. The newspaper article, while it was certainly sincere, I don't think stated it accurately. If it was meant to portray that the University Med Center was completely underutilized with beds, it is not the case. They are out of room for hospital beds. Understand also, however, that this does not mean that they are asking for more beds. They are not, because the shift in practice towards the outpatient care, they feel that it is more important for them to get into the ambulatory care, the outpatient care, the clinic type of care, and so they are not asking for more beds. But it was inaccurate to say that they have a lot of empty beds over there just going wasting and now they want to build something new. That is inaccurate. Secondly, Senator Moore has pointed out that he is concerned about growth in General Funds, and I