

**SPEAKER BARRETT:** Thank you. Discussion on LB 187, Senator Weihing, followed by Senator Nelson and Senator Schmit.

**SENATOR WEIHING:** Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I rise to support this bill, LB 187. It will certainly help to address certain equalities that do exist in our state. We have counties that really have a very difficult time handling any indigent people. They are rather sparsely populated counties which may or may not have any hospital facilities whatsoever when these facilities are needed. As a consequence, many of these people then have to go to regional centers, and it comes to mind, I am certain that Lincoln County where North Platte resides, that we have a considerable number of people that come to that county because of indigent care. Now this is certainly true in Scottsbluff where we have sparsely populated counties to the outside of us and, further, we have the migrant because they are the crossroads of the transportation. We have a lot of people that come and this bring about an inequality with regards to certain counties having to bear the brunt, so to speak, of the cost of indigent care. This particular bill would help to a degree in equalizing that type of cost, and least...and also, and not least, is that it would help to some degree with regards to the property tax problem, because within the counties, their source of funds in part are from the property tax. So I urge you to look upon this bill as one that will help bring about equality within the state in handling the indigent, and equality in the cost of handling the indigent care problem, and I hope that it will advance.

**SPEAKER BARRETT:** Thank you. Senator Nelson.

**SENATOR NELSON:** Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I, too, hope to support LB 187. I am like Senator Lynch, when I see some of those fiscal notes, I might have to question the fiscal note, and I guess the bottom line, this is one group of people that if there are any that we need to help, it is probably these. This was pointed out to me and I hurriedly tried to get some facts from my own hospital at home of which they provide this care for some of the out counties, the counties north of Grand Island and so on. What is happening is these people need this care and this service. They are probably brought in in many cases maybe a little sicker because they have not received a preventive care that they should have had. Two things, we should try to provide this service for these folks and also, then, counties that, a hospital like my own, say, for example, a