

little county like Greeley County or something like that, they send their patients in and then our hospital or my hospital at home then bills this county for those services. Frankly, what is happening is those counties are up against their mill limit or their money that is available, and then, consequently, the St. Francis Hospital at home does not receive all of their payment, or in a couple of cases in 1988 received no payment whatsoever. One case was in the amount of \$13,000, another case in the amount of \$5,000, over the past year, and my aide just brought these figures up and I called for them earlier this morning. The total amount was \$150,000, a little over that, not, I suppose in hospital expenses, not a big item when you know how much some of them do but eventually what happens is the other patients are going to pay for that or, hopefully, or that is figured in the overall hospital cost. So it is not fair for the larger hospitals that are being brought in to have to absorb that from the smaller counties. I also have another question, if Senator Lynch would answer this for me. I remember a couple of years ago we had quite a large discussion here on the floor of which we were giving somewhat benefits I believe to St. Joe's Hospital in Omaha for serving the indigent. Do you recall that, Senator Lynch? Or can anyone else? I remember, I think Senator Higgins carried that bill, or we had a lot of discussion, and it was since they take care of the indigent in Omaha, they were then given some special benefits, and then about that same time I think they went from a nonprofit to a profit hospital, and the question then entered into it, should or they should not. Would this affect St. Joe and that program at all, or do you know anything about it?

SENATOR LYNCH: Well, it is my understanding, Senator Smith, that...

SENATOR NELSON: Oh, an honor.

SENATOR LYNCH: ...Senator Smith, I am sorry, Senator Nelson, I apologize for that, that the hospitals providing the service to the indigent under this bill would be the ones who receive the dollars, obviously, based on the claims that would be provided from the hospital to the Department of Social Services. It is my understanding, also, that 10 to 15 percent of the hospitals in the state are now providing about 80 percent of the so-called indigent, in this particular case, and under this bill indigent care described by this bill.