

tremendously different.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Senator Warner. Before we go to the next speaker, I'm delighted to announce there are 16 students with their teachers from the Lexington Public Schools. They are guests of Senator Barrett. Would you please rise and be recognized by the Legislature. Senator Smith, on the advancement of LB 362A.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Madam President. I hope that the members of the body are listening to this discussion, and I don't think very many are. Senator Wesely, I think that what I'm going to do is offer an amendment on Select File. You know how I feel about this issue, you know that I was very supportive of it to a point. I guess the point where I, I guess, draw the line is when we're asking, and if people will look at their pink slip here, which is the fiscal note, down in the second part of the bill which deals with allowing the spouse of a nursing home client, who is covered by Medicaid, to retain half of the couple's assets and you go through that part of it down there, which is the second part of the bill. Look down below where you're talking here about, for instance, the amount of money that we're going to allow that spouse, that community spouse, if you want to call them that, the one that is remaining in the home, to retain as a monthly income from their so-called...income from their Social Security, for instance, the money they can have, which would be up to...by 1992 will be almost \$1,000 a month for one person living in the home. And also we're increasing the amount that they're allowed as the value of the home for their share to \$60,000. And then, in addition to that, we are going beyond the federal minimum requirement of other assets that they could have to the amount of \$25,000. And that is not bad in itself, but for many people in the State of Nebraska who are being asked to support that other spouse in a nursing home that is a good income. That is more than many young families with children, if they're trying to raise and prepare for the future, have at their disposal. And so I guess I'm saying at this point in time I want to do what we can to help people, but not to the point where they're better off by their help than those people that are supporting them. And so I would ask that we look at what we did last year, and this is why this is this way, because of what we did on the one side. I would like us to then look at what we did and reamend this bill some way so that...not this bill but the bill itself, which then would lower the amount of other assets that