

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Rod Johnson.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Mr. President, members, I rise to support Senator Wesely's bill. I was approached by some morticians in my district prior to the session beginning. And they showed interest in this issue in particular with the section that deals with Medicaid individuals and raising the fee up to \$5,000. I think Senator Smith covered many of the points I wanted to cover, but they had approached me about sponsoring a bill. But when they heard that Senator Wesely was working on this issue as well, I deferred to him, and I'm pleased to see the bill has made it to the floor and will be discussed here today and hopefully advanced. I think it is a necessary change that needs to be made. I support it wholeheartedly. I think it will be a benefit to all parties involved by making these recommended changes.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you, sir. Senator Schellpeper, followed by Senator Smith.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. I would like to ask Senator Smith a question, please.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Smith, would you respond.

SENATOR SMITH: Yes.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: I think that this bill is a very good idea, and I think it's a very even figure, except for maybe the \$5,000 in '91. Would you have any problem with an amendment to lower that down to maybe 4,000?

SENATOR SMITH: Not four....I think we're asking 4,005, aren't we, initially, in the increase? Four thousand, okay, so you're saying keep it at 4,000, is that....

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Yes, leave it at four.

SENATOR SMITH: I guess that I don't like the idea particularly, Senator Schellpeper, but I also think that if we can give the increase for \$1,000 more that....At this point in time, yes, I would, if that is the condition for passing the bill I would still support it, based on that. But what is going to happen is that over time we're going to be back, within a few years, asking for another increase. And that is my only concern.