

your have \$15,000 in assets. You get 12,000 and the 3,000 would go to the care of your spouse in a nursing home, for instance. You would then go up, say, 20,000 in assets, again, you would keep 12,000 and 8,000 would go into care for the spouse in the nursing home. Then at 25,000, from that point up in assets, you would just start splitting it in half. So, then you would go up to 120,000 in assets, you would be able to keep 60,000, and 60,000 would go to the care of your spouse, and then from that point on, above that in assets, you couldn't keep it. Everything would go toward the care of your spouse in the nursing home. So that is really where we are at on it, and the savings on this amendment on this bill, it is now calling for about 1.6 million in General Fund money. That is matched by a 2.35 million in federal. It would drop it by over \$600,000. So by adopting this amendment, Senator Smith is saving us \$600,000 that I have got a few ideas that could be perhaps better spent on some other programs we have pending. So, I think in terms of priorities, there are better spending priorities for that money, and it is a significant amount of money, and so, at this time, I would support the amendment and suggest you support it as well.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. We are operating at a bit of a handicap this morning. About half of our console up here is not operational. Is there anyone else that would care to speak to the amendment, would you please raise your hand so that we can double-check our system? Anyone else? Senator Beck, thank you.

SENATOR BECK: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I would rise to support Senator Smith's amendment, and with the idea that it might be a cost savings to the taxpayer, I think we could all spend it, but I like her amendment very much and I think we should pass this immediately.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Schmit, please. Senator Schmit, excuse me. Would you please push your button, the Chair button, is it on? Okay, thank you very much. Proceed.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, I will support the amendment and support the bill. I just want to point out, however, that no matter how well-intended you work on these kinds of issues, it doesn't prevent the individual who knows they have some difficulty from protecting assets in other ways. I am not sure just what the answer is except that I would just like to remind you that the amount of assets we are talking about here could dissipate very rapidly given the present cost