

taken the vast majority and I think it is something that the people can work with and it's something that we should do, and so I would support the amendments. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Schmit, on the amendment to the amendment.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, I have no objection to the amendments to the amendment, but I just want to say at this time I did not know that CON was responsible for increasing the cost of health care in the State of Nebraska, but I do want to say this. There was a time back when myself and Senator Wesely and Landis and Hoagland and Vard Johnson and a few others established a pretty substantial certificate of need law in Nebraska. At the present time we have a mere shadow of that bill and by the time that we get through with 429 we will have only the shadow of a skeleton and so, therefore, I have drafted an amendment which will repeal the entire certificate of need because I think that it doesn't really make much sense to go through the charade. If, in fact, it is true that certificate of need has increased the cost of health care in Nebraska, that wasn't what we intended. Now I'm not admitting that at this time because it was my intention to try to hold down the cost of health care. I have to say this, and I agree with much of what Senator Owen Elmer has said. It really hasn't worked lately. You just go in there and you get your rubber stamp and you proceed with a couple of little exceptions of course. It's kind of like anything else. If you want to spend 50 million, you can get that approved. If you want to spend a few thousand, then you run into obstacles. So I'll discuss that a little bit more later on but I just want to caution you, ladies and gentlemen, that as the cost of health care escalates in this state and in this country to the point where the average person, and I don't mean a state employee, I don't mean a federal employee, I mean the person who pull on their pants and their shirts and their socks in the morning and go out and get a job in the private sector can no longer afford health care. At that point in time we don't want to sit around and wonder what happened to us. I hope that doesn't happen in the immediate future, but it has almost reached that point now. It has almost reached that point now. It may well be that the present language is inoperable, but if you will just take a look at what we are doing under 429, I think we ought to admit that we have left nothing really, nothing in the bill that can possibly help hold down the cost of health care and so we ought to really consider adjust outright