

but is one we cannot ignore and must address, and the one initiative that we have before us at this time, the certificate of need initiative, one that we have to recognize plays at least a role in trying to contain health care cost and needs to be changed and improved but can't be weakened or gutted to a point where it is not effective any longer in dealing with those problems of duplication of services and excessive expenditures beyond what is reasonable. Now I know as we go through this and talk about the amendments, that there will be an easy and a hard way for you to go...

SENATOR HANNIBAL: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...and the easy way will be for you to vote against this amendment and perhaps some other amendments because I can tell you, and I know the lobby has got a number of representatives there from the hospital, nursing homes, perhaps the physicians. They are very much in agreement and want to see the bill go through as it is, although we're continuing to negotiate. The Department of Health and the health and insurance industry cares about this question, but are neutralized and unable to participate in helping us to contain the costs of health care and get involved in this issue, and who is left on the other side? Well, that's us really, representing the consumers, the public, the taxpayers of this state. That is who we are here to represent, that is who we are here to try to serve and in my estimation this bill is inadequate in meeting the concerns of the consumers, the public and the taxpayers because it too far weakens the certificate of need process and with reasonable amendments which I am offering at this time we can get back to a change in the bill that improves the legislation and still maintains the oversight we need on this very important matter.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Before we proceed, I understand we will have an amendment to the amendment, but, Mr. Clerk, do you have anything for the record?

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator, just one item, Senator Lindsay would like to add his name to LB 325 as co-introducer. (See page 1681 of the Legislative Journal.) That's all that I have, Mr. President.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Senator Wesely, would you care to recess us for the noon hour?