

PRESIDENT: Senator Lindsay, please.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Senator Lindsay, how many teams of doctors now operate in open heart surgery at St. Joe?

SENATOR LINDSAY: I don't know, I believe it's one. I shouldn't say, I think there's two doctors that I've heard of. If what you're saying is...I would agree that the same doctors would be performing the surgeries at Bergan as would be performing...(interruption)

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Yes, that's what I was...

SENATOR LINDSAY: No question about that.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: But you know I guess it makes no difference to me as long as they're a competent, well educated doctor, where they operate, whether it's at St. Joe or Bergan Mercy. I think if you go into Bergan Mercy with a heart problem you should be able to be operated on rather than have to be moved to St. Joe. So I guess as long as the doctors are educated and very competent, I see no problem why they can't operate at that hospital. So I would be opposed to this amendment.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Pirsch, followed by Senator Chambers, please.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Mr. President. I can't tell you any statistics. And while I voted for the certificate of need, because I was concerned about health care costs, I can tell you from personal experience that you don't go looking at costs when you look for open heart surgery. I didn't plan to speak, but I do support Senator Lindsay's amendment. As many of you know, my husband, Al, had heart surgery a year ago in February. Al had an angioplasty at one hospital, and they tried to rush him into surgery the next morning, for the open heart surgery, but we were not about to be rushed, quite frankly. And we did shopping around and we did consultation with everyone that we had known that had ever had heart surgery, and quite frankly we moved. We moved from the hospital that did the preparation to a hospital and a surgeon that had done over 200 of these operations, and what was impressed on us time and time again, by the people that we spoke to when we were looking for the best darn surgeon, was that you should have the best darn team along with that surgeon.