

SENATOR ELMER: Question.

SPEAKER BARRETT: The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I do. The question is, shall debate cease? Those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Record.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Debate ceases. Senator Wesely, to close.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the kind words that some of you have shared with me and, you know, it has been kind of lonely up here, but I also know that there are many that share my concerns, and I do appreciate that a great deal. I did pass out a handout from the Wall Street Journal talking about the latest survey shows hospital charges increasing far more quickly than the CPI. Then it goes through the 20 highest cities and the 20 lowest cities, and it varies from \$350 average charge per day to \$1,500 average charge per day, and it is just an indication of how wide the variance is on cost, not just between cities, but it is also that way between hospitals, and it is between different facilities, and if we could start to get an understanding of what the costs are, and what hospitals are charging, and what other facilities are charging, and also look at what the quality is of those facilities, and what is happening out there in the health care industry, we would be much better able to make good policy decisions as a Legislature, and much better to make good decisions as consumers. And Senator Schimek said, perhaps people were seeing this as a sleeper issue and aren't paying the attention they should to it. If you recall, after we had the General File discussion, there were three different editorials by the World-Herald, and the Star, and the Journal, and in each of those, they talked about the need for having a better bill than 429 was, that LB 429 too far went toward weakening the certificate of need process, and I really, again, recognize that they are individuals who have followed this. Those newspapers have been involved in this, and they were not asleep. They saw the issue and tried to raise concern. Since that time, after those editorials came out, several of you came to me and said, gee, you know, I really want to work on this more and want to see if we can help and, unfortunately, that hasn't always followed up and I have been concerned about that. But when you have the outside pressures that you have, I can understand. I am not really that down on you. I understand that. But it is