

with the administration of medications in various facilities in the state. Those facilities include what are called domiciliary facilities, residential care facilities, mental health centers and centers for the developmentally disabled or CDDs. It was found that there was a need for statutory authority to allow individuals that are employed in these facilities to disperse medications to their residents because the Nursing Practice Act seemed to cover this type of activity. And so authorization was given in the statute that was passed a number of years ago but the training and standards to allow the implementation of that statute were never clarified until LB 355, hopefully, will pass this year to deal with that problem. And so we have gone on for some time now with a statute that has not been implementable because of Attorney General Opinions and the Department of Health has struggled to try and get this problem resolved and we have come to the conclusion between the Health Department and the Attorney General that some clarification has to be in order in order to actually implement that bill and allow these people, these assistants to administer these medications. Now the original bill called for 21 hours of training, initially, to authorize these assistants to administer these medications. And when I talk about these medications, I'm talking about prescriptions or what have you that a doctor prescribes and a pharmacist fills out and also topical applications of salve on a wound or whatever. They're...they're minor in...to a great extent. In any event, we have required 21 hours of training and opposition to the bill came from regional services regions for mentally retarded and they wanted that lowered to nine hours. The committee amendment does do that and also slightly changes the effective date from June 1 to July 1. But the other changes which I'm offering in this amendment, which has been distributed, would do the following. The fees that are collected under this would go to the Health Department Cash Fund. The severability clause would be added. Facilities that are now operated under an MR waiver would be included under this. The Health Department would approve training materials that would be developed by other state agencies. And the term "supervision" in the bill for the nurses providing oversight would be stricken and instead it would be "monitoring". The nurses would monitor this activity. These are amendments that come from the Health Department and so I would move these amendments to the committee amendments, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Senator Scofield, please.