

that is the issue on the child welfare workers. I'll go ahead and explain the other one as well. Senator Wesely also had an amendment filed on General File which he withdrew and has worked with this, which deals with the payment system on Title-XX day care rates. You will probably be aware, from just people who have talked to you and all kinds of conversations we had on the floor of the fact that we are below market rate in terms of reimbursing child care providers. And the concern is that these folks that are currently receiving benefits simply can't find places to place their children. So the committee added \$1,442,500 into this year's budget which would provide a 20 percent average increase in child care rates. And a second important point are those people who pay some portion of this cost would be held harmless, so that as those rates go up they are not faced with a rate increase that they have to make up out of their own very limited resources. So, this reduces the problem by one-half, which is consistent with the other kinds of things we've done. I think this will make a significant difference in the ability of those low income people who are trying to go out and make a living, find day care, which I suppose even if you've talked to your Yuppie friends lately you know how difficult that is and how expensive it is. So, we're offering this as one way to try to help those folks and keep them in the work force and at the same time secure a better quality of day care for children. If Senator Wesely would like some of my time, I'd be happy to give it to him since he's essentially been the one that's been taking the lead on these issues. But that is essentially an explanation of these two amendments. Senator Wesely, do you want to address either of these?

**SPEAKER BARRETT:** Senator Wesely, yours is the next light, if you'd like to just go ahead on your time.

**SENATOR WESELY:** Okay, I'll do that then. Mr. Speaker, members, I would rise in support of the committee amendments and thank the Appropriations Committee and the membership for their indulgence. These two issues were both part of legislation that came out of the committee and were committee priority bills which we haven't had a chance to bring to the floor. So, thanks to the cooperation of the Appropriations Committee, I did withdraw the amendments I had placed on General File, and I'm withdrawing them again on Select File. But I also want to emphasize to you how seriously I think the problems are that are being addressed and how the response that we hopefully will