

you say.

SENATOR ASHFORD: All right. I believe that...

SENATOR WARNER: If there is a contract, there is not a problem.

SENATOR ASHFORD: All right, thank you, Senator Warner. I believe that's the intent unless Senator Wesely has a different view about that. Of course, that's not my time so I don't know. Maybe Senator Wesely can answer that question.

SENATOR WESELY: I...actually, I think Senator Warner has raised a legitimate question. It's the same question I raised. You...you can't have the state handling a program paid for by the counties. You can't have property taxes paying for a state program. This amendment was brought to us by the administration, actually brought to Senator Ashford and I asked the same question. I'm not sure I have had it answered satisfactorily. I would think that you may be right, Senator Warner. As for the contracting, I don't think that's the case, Senator Ashford. I think we're...to have the state administer this program, that's a condition of the federal money so what the situation is, let me be very honest with you, Senator Warner, is that the counties have agreed evidently in negotiations with the administration to allow the state to take over administration to satisfy the federal mandate and yet continue to have county monies funding half of the program. That's what I understand the agreement is. I'm not so sure that can be done, myself.

SENATOR WARNER: Thank you, Senator Wesely. I guess it's always unfortunate we have these complicated issues at the end but it always comes out that way and it just can't be helped. But I...it would...I would have some serious concern that to adopt this I guess you could build in a deficit. I don't know that the authorization for that is there but it would seem to me that even an agreement between the city...the counties and the state, I would assume, could not circumvent the Constitution. So I'm not...I'm trying to make sure that I understand the effect, is all I'm doing, Senator Ashford.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Well, I...could I...

PRESIDENT: One minute.