

January 8, 1990

LB 720

SENATOR COORDSEN: Senator Wesely, do you know what the training and/or education requirements are for a CPS worker under current regulation? I don't.

SENATOR WESELY: They are not particularly stringent, I know that.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Okay.

SENATOR WESELY: That's been a problem.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Well, the reason I asked that question, I noticed in the fiscal notes that we have current funding for 207 CPS workers. As of December something, there were 189 currently employed, and I believe this would call for 56 additional. My concern was whether or not...what the requirements were as it relates to the ability to, in fact, hire 56 more people which would be roughly a 30 percent increase over the current employment...people in employment in those positions. So...and I was wondering how stringent those requirements were, how difficult it might be to hire not only the 56 more, but I believe there would be another 18 to come up to current funding levels, so it would be looking at 84 more employees which is about a 50 percent increase and are those people going to be available, are we going to be able to accomplish the aims of this bill?

SENATOR WESELY: If I could respond, Senator Coordsen, those are excellent questions.

SENATOR COORDSEN: If you would, please.

SENATOR WESELY: The way the committee decided to handle that was to phase in instead of completely going to that immediately. So instead of adding the 80 some workers immediately, we'll phase in over a period of time. There are already a number of them added this last year and will add more over the course of the next few years and bring us up to that total. We do, I guess, just a few months ago new minimum requirements were established for training for these individuals and I hadn't seen them before just now. I will look at these and share them with you and assess how difficult that will be, but I should also share with you, Senator Coordsen, I've had individuals come in and talk to me about, yes, we're understaffed on child protective services workers and we're understaffed on foster