

by providing coordinating services rather than fragmented services to be able to keep family units together and to assist economically disadvantaged families and help them to become economically self-sufficient. And we have found, after we have established this center, that we're the first resource center of this type not only in the State of Nebraska, but in the nation, and because of this a tremendous amount of focus has come to bear on us and we have people visiting of a regular basis now from many other states and many other parts of the country and they can see how valuable it is to bring all of these agencies together.

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR BYARS: But we aren't completed. We need to continue to work and strive in our efforts to combine government, to bring more of these agencies together to provide better services and LB 662 would assist us in continuing that effort that have already enabled us to better serve the children and families in southeast Nebraska and I'd like to share with you that this can work in all of Nebraska and I would encourage you to support and advance LB 662. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. President. I'm sorry you're going to have to listen to my voice, but I do have a bad cold and I apologize for that. Senator Scofield, I want to commend you for the hard work and the several meetings that you had in regard to LB 662 in the past year and a half and I do share with you a concern about the integrity of the family unit and doing as much as we can in regard to the protection of children and that is one of the reasons that I decided to join you on this bill, but, in the meantime, after reading the synopsis, there are some concerns that I have with respect to the broad sweep and the open-endedness of the bill, particularly regarding the bill reference to statewide comprehensive family centered array of services. As an example, I would like to go to Section 6 and 7 of the bill on page 6 and 7 and part of Section 5, and it says, it is the intent of the Legislature to phase in a statewide comprehensive family-centered array of services. It is further intended that services established through grants shall become a part of the comprehensive service system. The Director of Social Services, upon the recommendation of the commission, shall award start-up grants to eligible applicants