

Ashford and Byars. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 13 last year. At that time it was referred to the Health and Human Services Committee. The bill was advanced to General File. I have no amendments at this time, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Abboud.

SENATOR ABOUD: Yes.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Open on 422.

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President, this bill was brought in behalf of the county officials in the State of Nebraska. It's designed to establish a community service program to encourage employable recipients to enroll in vocational, rehabilitation, or job training programs or to require employable recipients to perform community service in exchange for the general assistance in lieu of their not choosing to attend rehabilitation, vocational ed or job training programs. The bill is pretty straightforward. There has been a number of discussions that we had in the off session in dealing with this particular issue the last couple of years. Senator Ashford spent a great deal of time on this issue and he was instrumental in getting the bill drafted in the manner that it is in the current form. I urge the approval of LB 422 on to Select File. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion, Senator Wesely, please.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body, I rise in opposition to LB 422. I appreciate Senator Abboud's intent here and understand the concerns of Douglas County, but if you recall this very same concept was presented to this Legislature just a couple of years ago and was defeated, killed by this body at that time. The bill was very similar to the one that we have before us. It was an attempt to, in the estimation of a majority of this body, make work for individuals under the counties' jurisdiction. The problem with that concept isn't so much that we don't appreciate the desire of counties with some financial obligation to our poor, suggesting that those poor take an active role in improving themselves and hopefully not continuing to be on the welfare rolls, but there is two different approaches here. So we can agree with the fact that if somebody is on welfare, we ought to try and have a system that doesn't have that continue into perpetuity, but the two