

we've got about 100 hospitals in this state, and a lot of them are county hospitals not in Omaha and Lincoln. And you've got to know, if you live out there, that they are so frustrated with this whole thing that they just take care of them and forget about the bill. They probably don't even submit because they know there is no money in the county to get it. This is, in that sense, a property tax relief bill as important as any other property tax relief bill you can think of, I don't care by who, because what you're going to be able to do with this is to stop the rather silly, if not stupid, but mostly unfair practice of using property tax dollars to pay for health care costs and at the same time cap off that responsibility for reimbursement for these kinds of patients based on this very difficult eligibility at 7.2. I certainly understand and respect the concerns of both Senator Moore and Senator Scofield, but understand this is a cap. Now, if it escalates to hundreds of millions of dollars (laugh), the body is going to have to be involved with that, not me. This bill won't cause that to happen, it can't, it has the cap. There is no suggestion that it be changed. I think we have to give it a shot. And I think with this you will, at the same time, begin, like 46 or 7 other states, to understand that property tax is not the appropriate vehicle to pay for health care costs. And at the same time put in place some eligibility standards for reimbursement that makes sense, and most importantly as far as the areas outside...Sandy has a resolution, I'm not quite sure what it says, but whatever she calls it, that's what I'll use. So insert in the record whatever she says in her....But, in any case, those areas outside of Omaha and Lincoln, you'll probably see, after the first year, hopefully that this is successful. How many of your hospitals out there have been hurting? How many just haven't passed in the bills? I know a lot of county officials, I used to be one, and I talk to a lot of them, they just haven't submitted them because they know their county doesn't have the money. And I think their county boards appreciate that. But it seems to make sense to me to do two things, recognize the rightful use of whatever source of funds to pay for these care...this kind of care, help the hospitals, God bless them, that are doing the work, not just all the hospitals, whether they deserve it or not, but by this criteria just those that are providing this care for these poor souls and keep a cap on it so we can understand that all those hospitals involved will know they have to be pretty selective when they submit these bills that, in fact, it's appropriate and fair. I would ask for your support for this amendment.