

you're a county? How do you budget for that especially given the cap that we provided in 1059 if 1059 is successful for these kind of indigent medical care needs? Obviously, you can't. That's why you can't use the indicator that Scotty Moore used saying that only \$4 million is budgeted for. That's the tip of the iceberg. By the way, the numbers are pretty consistent over the last three years. Twelve million dollars would be fair...could you...\$12 million could be fair because, in fact, that's what hospitals actually need. The hospitals across the state, though graciously agreed, given the budget circumstances we are at this time in the state, to settle for the 7.2. That means again, I want you to know I'm not, if my voice sounds funny, I'm not again emotional, I'm still carrying over from a cold. Understand that, I'm not trying to get your sympathy by talking like I'm really emotional, I'm not. But what I do want you to understand is that this is a serious and important issue and, in fact, deserves your attention and understanding, hopefully, so you can support it.

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR LYNCH: I have much more to say so I'll put my light back on or maybe use it in closing. But 90 percent of the uncompensated care for the poor is provided by 20 percent of the hospitals in Omaha and by 75 percent of the hospitals in greater Nebraska. So 20 percent of the hospitals in the Omaha area and 25 percent of the hospitals in your areas are providing this indigent care. You can cut up the pie any way you want to and that hurts, ladies and gentlemen. That hurts those institutions. We can document that in case it's necessary. However small it might be, the hospital in your area, this indigent care cost is a terrible burden to bear. If we don't address this issue this year, when? This issue will be with us again next year. It should be a property tax relief bill and it would be if, in fact, we don't use property taxes to pay these health care costs.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Time.

SENATOR LYNCH: Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Byars is announcing the presence of 12 ninth graders from Odell Public School in our south balcony with their teacher. Would you folks please stand and be recognized. Thank you. We're pleased to have you with