

This is not a new program. This is an enhancement of a program already in place. In Lincoln, we have several nursing home facilities. One, in particular, Lancaster Manor, is a government run place and each year, in fact, during the year they have an auxiliary who works very hard, especially at Christmas, to get presents for the people who live there because so many of them are without extra funds. And every nursing home that you go into you find people who hardly have a family. There is always one or two at least and at Lancaster Manor especially a lot of people who don't have family around. They don't have any way of getting the little things that they need. They hardly can get a haircut, that kind of thing. So I think you have to have a little compassion for people like that. And when you talk about the population of the nursing homes and that they struggled along for several years, yes, they have, and maybe they can struggle along for another couple of years. Well, Senator Smith, I think you'll agree with me, another couple of years some of them won't be there but another group will come to take their place because you and I, each one of us age a little bit every day. And so we have to keep these things in mind when we line up our priorities. And, as a member of the Appropriations Committee, I will pay particular attention to the Department of Social Services budget when we start going through it and when they come in to see what their reaction and their attitude is about this particular thing because it is something near and dear to my heart and I do feel that we are chintzy when we say, you know, \$30 a month. Put yourself in that person's place. You can't even buy a Coke out of a machine for... it takes 50 cents. There goes half of your dollar for the day, and certainly they are entitled to a little enjoyment along the way. They don't have to just be in this regimen that the nursing home has them in. So I guess that's what I'm speaking from my heart. I hope you'll listen to your heart and, yes, at the end we'll have to line it all up and see which ones we can go for because I don't want a raise in taxes either, no one does. But this particular bill, I'd at least like it to be in that line on Final Reading. So, thank you very much.

SENATOR WARNER: Thank you. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President, members, I apologize for being a little late joining in the fray but I want to extend my appreciation to Senator Smith for again leading the charge on this effort. I'm happy to be able to co-sponsor the bill with her. We did introduce this a couple of years ago, had it passed