

unanimously by this body, vetoed after the end of the session. We introduced it again last year, unfortunately ran out of time, did not have a chance to bring it up. I hope...I don't know if we'll have a chance to have it unanimously passed again, but maybe times aren't as good as they were a couple of years ago, I understand that. But the cause is just and the effort is a righteous one because what we're talking about here is individuals that have been, in many cases, stripped of their dignity, taken down to the very basic minimum of their resources in order to survive in a nursing home. Medicaid program takes away your personal assets, takes away your personal income down to next to nothing and these individuals are then left to live on, at this current time, \$30 a month, a dollar a day. That covers their hair styling, that covers their clothing, that covers the Christmas cards they write to their grandchildren, that covers any number of items and we are asking that this is simply an inhumane situation for these individuals, one in which they deserve a greater degree of dignity than they are now getting under the current reimbursement. Understanding, of course, the fiscal constraints that we have, I think both Senator Smith and myself would be open to discussing with Senator Moore and others, Senator Haberman, who have expressed concerns, after we have a chance to look at the budget to see what we can afford. But in any event, some increase is certainly in order and it would be my impression that, and my suggestion, that we ought to proceed with the bill and advance the legislation and after we have a chance to look at the budget later on we can take some steps to try and deal with some of these cost estimates. But let me again encourage you to note, Senator Haberman talked about the, if we increase will the federal increase? It depends on the circumstance. In some cases, that is exactly the case, Senator, some of the different programs that are linked up to federal monies if we increase ours, say 40 cents, the federal government will increase theirs 60 cents and so that is why you see in the fiscal note some increase in federal expenditures. That isn't always the case and so in some instances we'll have to raise our state expenditures in this area and not have a federal match. But, in any event in either case, it is money well spent to try and bring again back to these individuals the dignity that they deserve. And it is not only people in nursing homes or elderly, but it's also our mentally retarded and our mentally ill living in these various group home settings. These individuals, likewise, have lost income and assets in order to be provided for under these programs. We're simply saying that we've cut