

you go the 30 hours and, I mean, could anyone say, well, I want to be a mediator, could the grocer down the street, real nice guy, could he go to 30 hours of class and be a mediator? Or what kind of checks and balances do we have for some type of a quality there for mediation?

SENATOR LANDIS: The answer to your question is, yes. A grocer could take 30 hours of training, deal with a center, show their skills. The mediator, remember, is not a decision-maker, simply an assistant in the communication process. By the way, my guess is that there's lots of times when a well-trained mediator grocer would be an excellent mediator.

SENATOR ROBINSON: Now, are there...are there people that evaluate him so that he could become a mediator or is it just automatic?

SENATOR LANDIS: Oh, it's not automatic. The...you could get the training but that doesn't mean that the center will necessarily use you. In the event...for a center to use someone, that person has to have 30 hours of training. It doesn't mean that everybody who has 30 hours of training the center has to use. And, by the way, it's quite common in the case of mediation that the two parties agree on the identity of the mediator if that's a potential dispute.

SENATOR ROBINSON: Okay. Now you talk about the center does this and the center does that, well, who is the center? Do they have an administrator or...I just see that there is so much money allocated to each center.

SENATOR LANDIS: I would anticipate that there would be an administrator. You can't run an operation like this in which you're scheduling things, sending out notices, making sure that your mediator is there, without an administration. But, if you notice, it's not like we want to create a bureaucracy with all these different kinds of positions and the like. The center is created by the local entity that is sponsoring the mediation program. It's going to be a 501(c)3, might be the Interchurch Ministries. It might be a community center that has a grant that they have made and have succeeded in getting. But those people that run the program will also have the additional insight and assistance of a statewide advisory commission that's out there to set up guidelines.