

it will come out for the better to everyone. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. The next speaker is Senator Rasmussen.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: Mr. Chairman, members of the body, I, too, rise in strong support of LB 830. I regretfully signed off on the amendments, committee amendments, because I, too, think that we have a real problem when we have a disparity of county contributions ranging from 35 cents per child to \$6.00 per child and something needs to be done about that. I'm also regretful that we did eliminate the entitlement. It does not make a whole lot of sense to me to invest everything from zero to 21 and then have nothing from there on. It also is disheartening because there are those who really want and deserve appropriate services and I know that that's not a comfortable situation for the individuals with disabilities nor for their families. And I hope that this committee and body will continue to work on addressing those issues. But most of us on the committee recognized the tremendous work that the task force had done and recognized that there were many other really important elements in 830 that needed to be approved by this body and that it was worthwhile to continue to get some of these important things done in 830 and we would continue to work on other issues, once this passes, during the interim. I think it's important that we expand the definition, just one too many times watch families fall through the cracks because they didn't have the right label in order to get the services. There was no doubt that they were in need of programs and that the programs that were being provided through mental retardation services were appropriate but because they didn't have that label they weren't getting them. I think it's also important, as Senator Byars mentioned, that we have included due process in here to make sure that those individuals and families who feel like they have been served inappropriately have some place to go to try and work out a more appropriate situation for them. I think it's also important that 830 recognizes the role of the individual with a disability and their right to be actively involved in the decision-making processes and that they...their opinions and their desires and their interests will be considered just as anybody's would in terms of planning for their life. I also think it's critical that we look at developing a department of developmental disabilities. One of the things that I am concerned about and have had experience with is the terrible fragmentation, families having to go to five or six different