

legislation varies considerably in context to respect with what types of policies are included. To go back a little bit, as Senator Wesely mentioned, there have been bills before this Legislature in the past. In fact, I signed on to a couple of bills last year with Senator McFarland, and the year before that. Two of these bills asked and called for mandated coverage. One of the bills was an attempt to create a statewide program of screening mammography for Nebraska. Both bills were indefinitely postponed last year, and the one the year before was also IPP'd. Neither...none of them made it out of committee. So last summer when I was at a conference and talked to another woman senator from Colorado, I discovered that she had had the same problem in Colorado and had come back with a bill that is very similar to the one that I've brought to you today. And I must tell you that the response to this bill has been phenomenal. In the committee hearing, I don't believe there was anybody who testified against, and many women from all over the state came in to testify. One woman was so enthused about the bill, she had told her entire Jazzercise class, had gotten them all to sign petitions. She tried to get bills for everybody, found out she could only get 10 from the Bill Room, so she sent her friends in to get more bills. They came in with 280, or something like that, signatures on petitions on this bill. I would like to go through the bill with you and talk about the provisions of the bill. Section 1 defines the terms. Section 2 establishes a statewide program of mammography screening for Nebraska women who can provide the name of a physician for follow-up. And the payment will be based on the ability of the applicants to pay, and this will be based on federal poverty guidelines. Section 3 contains the frequency of screening. Now what we are talking about here is screening, not diagnostic mammographies, but screening mammographies, which can detect cancer at a very early stage, and this would cover asymptomatic women over 30 but under 50, and the program would reimburse the supplier for one screening after 11 months have passed following the last screening. If the woman is not in this category, the guidelines recommend women have one baseline screening when over 34 but under 40 years of age. Madam President, may I have a gavel, please.

PRESIDENT MOUL: (Gavel.)

SENATOR SCHIMEK: I really think this is a fairly significant issue. We are talking about a killer here that affects large numbers of women in our society, and we are talking about a