

January 16, 1992 LB 671

SENATOR ROBAK: Apparently, Dr. Koop, the former Surgeon General of the United States, had made a statement saying that this is...that they have changed the wording of the living will so that it opens the door to euthanasia a little wider.

SENATOR LANDIS: He may well have been speaking about a bill, a different set of language, or whatever else. The source of this language is trying to merge the best of state laws that are out there, as performed by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws. I can't tell from the quotation what Surgeon General Koop was talking about.

SENATOR ROBAK: Okay, thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Robak. Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Madam Chairman. As usual, I will rise in opposition to LB 671. As I said before, within the living will are some phrases such as incurable, or irreversible condition; and coming from a large family like I do, we have had diabetes, Alzheimer's, and certain blood diseases which are incurable and irreversible conditions, and most people live very fruitful lives in spite of their incurable or irreversible disease. If you end up in a hospital unconscious, the doctor could legally refuse you any type of treatment. In the past, and I always bring up members of my family, the last two deaths in my family, one of them was a sister that was in her late seventies and the doctors came out and told the family that they were going to have to amputate the leg, and we made that decision at that time that my sister would never want us to allow that. She was in a coma, and he said if she did not...if he did not amputate her leg, she would die. But we made that decision, the family, the son, the husband, and within 48 hours, she did pass away. Just recently I had the same thing happen to my brother. We had to make a decision and visited with his wife and children, and the wife and children made the decision that there would be no extraordinary equipment used on my brother, and in a few days, he also passed away. On page 4, on line 12 and 13, it says that the declaration must be witnessed by two individuals, and there is no limitations, whatsoever, and I would like to ask Senator Landis, could minors be witnesses for this purpose or relatives or someone who stands to inherit upon death of the individual? Does that mean that any two individuals, regardless of their competence, age, or