

above and beyond its premium tax that it pays to the State of Nebraska. And the language itself, as it's described in the amendment, states that the insurer is required to pay the premium CHIP assessment during the year, and is also required to pay its premium tax prepayments during the year, so that the individual insurance company would be assessed towards future cost of that premium tax. It's...I feel it's a good amendment. It dealt with a lot of...this bill dealt with a lot of the different areas, it was brought to us by Senator Wesely. And Senator Wesely felt that this was a good approach on dealing with this very serious problem. A number of what this bill, LB 835 when it was originally introduced, a lot of this bill, it was kind of a catchall for a lot of the problems we've been having with CHIP over the years. And it was our way to try to solve some of these problems. Well, a lot of this bill was amended into another bill, LB 419, an omnibus insurance bill. And with that particular bill a lot of the concerns that were part of 835 were passed into law. So, it was not needed, this bill was not needed, except for this one section, as I viewed it. Senator Wesely, I think, could comment as well in support of the particular amendment. But that's what it describes. So the amendment strips the committee amendments and we're left with this particular amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Abboud. Senator Landis, to speak to the Abboud amendment.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature. Did you get that one? Did you get that last...what we're working on here, because it's kind of important to know where we are. What we've got here is an amendment to strip out everything in the bill and to stick in a cap on the contributions of the insurance companies to run the Comprehensive Health Insurance Program. Okay? This is a cap for insurance companies for their contributions on the CHIP program. That's what the amendment is. Basically the blues have been out lobbying, and my guess is their vote count shows at least 25 votes late this afternoon to do this. But I'm going to get up and do five minutes as to why we shouldn't do this at this time, sit down and watch a flood of green lights up there, probably. First, we have a basic problem in the CHIP program and it's.. and the problem is that we have growth in that program that outstrips what seems to be the available revenue. And the available revenue right now are assessments against insurance companies and the money comes into this program rather