

support of LB 1099 and want to commend Senator Withem for bringing this issue to us and picking it as a priority bill. We had quite a hearing on it and very much, a lot of support for the concept, and I'm glad that we're going to be able to see the bill passed hopefully this session. Senator Wehrbein asked about the leave provisions of the bill and obviously the original draft of the bill called for a mandated paid leave and we will be discussing shortly an issue of family medical leave. This bill does emphasize again another example of where we need to give people time to deal with their medical problems, in this case the ability to go forward and donate and help save the lives of others. We would, in this bill, encourage employers to do that. Hopefully through the family medical leave bill, we would be able to provide unpaid leave for them to do that as well. But it seems important to note how medical problems have a bearing on so many different lives, some times in a way we can't ever anticipate. As Senator Chambers said, it's too bad we have to wait till tragedy strikes to recognize the need for some things to be done, but in those lessons we can go forward and hopefully avert further tragedy and so I'm very pleased that Senator Withem is moving on this legislation. I very much support it. Thank you.

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

SENATOR ROBAK: Thank you, Madam Speaker, members of the body. I have a few comments or questions, perhaps, for Senator Withem. I was interested in this bill only from the aspect where I thought it was a very good bill and I still do, but listening to the debate that we have here today, I just wondered do other...you mentioned one other state having this?

SENATOR WITHEM: I know that the State of Minnesota has passed the legislation.

SENATOR ROBAK: Okay. And I was just wondering if, perhaps, you looked into the aspect of probably having the American Red Cross be involved in this. They are very active in blood services right here in Omaha. Have you ever toured the facility of the blood services?

SENATOR WITHEM: The a...the American Red Cross is very supportive of the legislation and they do, in fact, up on the Omaha area, coordinate the drives that do exist up there for donors.