

Senator Schmit, did you wish to address the bracket motion?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Yes, Mr. President, gladly. It's always interesting how we use the rules when we wish to use the rules when they serve our purpose. When they don't serve our purpose then we rise in righteous indignation and absolutely demand that we use a different kind of criteria. Ladies and gentlemen, I could be very angry also. I have a right to be angry. LB 1286 was heard before the Health Committee. Not one reporter ever covered 1286. You have not seen one word, you have never seen the digits mentioned in the paper, nor on radio or TV, to my knowledge, and I listen to all of that nonsense. No one ever indicated that it was an important bill. It is one of the most important and one of the most controversial bills, I think Senator Dennis will agree, that was introduced this session. But because it deals with a gut issue, it deals with a basic problem, it deals with what Senator Hall says, with the possibility of \$100 million budget impact next year, it deals with important people, it deals with powerful structures, it deals with those entities who have the ability to influence, intimidate and isolate you from reality, and you don't want to face the facts. Ladies and gentlemen, I was the darling of the health care industry back in the middle seventies when I took on the trial attorneys and passed, with a lot of help, the Medical Malpractice Act. Senator Chambers and I went eyeball to eyeball for a long time and we finally prevailed. Promises were made to myself and to this Legislature that this will help hold down the cost of health care. Ladies and gentlemen, it hasn't worked. Nebraska is one or two from the bottom in the cost of malpractice insurance yet our rates are right up there with the rest of the states when it comes to malpractice insurance. We haven't saved our citizens one dime. It is generally accepted that we have the best medical malpractice law in the United States. I don't remember getting many thank you letters for that, maybe a handful. But the facts are these, health care costs continue to escalate. Senator Byars is indignant. Senator Byars, year after year I had my priority bill reposing in the Revenue Committee, never saw the light of day because the Revenue Committee didn't see to put out a bill that was tough and gutsy and controversial. Might have prevented some of the problems we're facing today had those bills seen the light of day. The facts are, ladies and gentlemen, that most of the time we don't like to deal with the tough issues. We want to talk about the \$10,000 appropriation to the dog and cat fund. We want to talk about nonsense. You talk about priorities, ladies