

September 29, 1992 LB 20, 27

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, the amendment that I'm asking you to reconsider was handed out, and a copy was placed on each member's desk. But in case you don't have it, it's printed in the Journal on pages 97 and 98. Part of the difficulty with this amendment lies in the fact that it deals with two subjects. One relates to the ADC payments that would be available to a pregnant woman during the last three months of her pregnancy. The second portion dealt with Medicaid eligibility standards. The two probably ought not to have been offered in one amendment, but, nevertheless, they were. So what I probably will do is try to offer the one item by itself, if this reconsideration is not successful. The main thrust of what is being attempted by LB 20 is to take away assistance from pregnant women. The amendment that I offered was the bill, LB 27, which had been offered by Senator Wesely. That's why it contains the two provisions. When I had it drafted as an amendment I just gave the bill, as it was introduced, to bill drafting to put together an amendment which is exactly what they did. I don't know whether the vote no was based on the feeling by the Legislature that LB 20 ought not be modified and it should be passed, no matter what, or whether there was some sympathy for one part of the amendment which dealt with assistance to pregnant women in the form of a payment, or sympathy with reference to the other part dealing with Medicaid standards, eligibility standards. Senator Moore had indicated that at some future time he might be willing to look at the Medicaid eligibility standards. Others had expressed some sympathy for providing assistance to a woman during the last three months of her pregnancy. What I would like to do is defeat LB 20 outright. I have, when I was driving down, I have listened to the radio, this morning, and heard Senator Ashford say that this bill is going to pass and that he doesn't think that it's very much out of the Social Services Department budget. But what Senator Ashford failed to tell was the damage to the pregnant women who will not receive that aid. And something troubling about Senator Ashford's comments, I wish he were here, but you all know that I'm not saying this only because he's not here. I would say it to him. And if he's in his office, I hope he's listening. He comes down here with bills to buy buildings and refurnish buildings like the Joslyn Castle in Omaha, he wants to give money for studies as to whether or not they should have some convention center in downtown Omaha, and he got the Legislature's Executive Board to vote, I don't remember if it was \$50,000 or more, to do this study. Then he can say that LB 20 is not a bad bill because