

September 29, 1992 LB 20

granted. I tend to place a higher priority on the health care side, the prenatal care side. The studies that have been shown, in fact show that if you do the prenatal care, you can actually, over a three to four year period, at least one study I've seen, have your investment repaid. We talked about LB 775, repayment of investment, if you look at this in pure economic terms, prenatal care is one of the best investments you can make in terms of any type of social program. One thing I will note, and this is of course open to discussion, but the people we're talking about here are between 133 percent of poverty and 185 percent of poverty. And I have those figures somewhere what dollar figures you're talking about. These are people that are not as poor as those that would qualify for the ADC cash payment. Those people are much poorer. The amount of income they have is much less than the people we're talking about with the prenatal care. But again those individuals also qualify for medical assistance, the Medicaid program. They're already getting covered on the health care, the prenatal care, they're getting the nutritional assistance. So they're not shut out completely, they do have those assistance programs. But I do want to note that when we talk about this prenatal program, it is for more of the individual that is perhaps working with low income jobs, no benefits, and we have many of those in our state, without the chance for health care for their pregnancy, despite the fact they have some income. So I think, again, it's a very important step to take. The cost saving...the cost of the prenatal care is, again, about \$1 million. The cost of this ADC cash assistance program is about \$2.2 million. So there is a savings. Another element of the Chambers amendment deals with the fact that instead of having to wait until the child is born, you can start the cash payment at any point, actually. But the federal government will start matching you in the seventh month. So the seventh, eighth and ninth month of the pregnancy the state, if they did, under this amendment, proceed to provide cash assistance, would have it matched by the federal government. And so if you wanted to maximize federal funds and maximize the leveraging of state dollars, the proposal before you is...

SPEAKER BAACK: Time.

SENATOR WESELY: ...is the best way to do it. But again, unfortunately, because of the circumstances, I will not be able to support this amendment at this time, but do hope that we will move in this direction at some point in the future, whether that