

September 29, 1992 LB 20

to find that five or six of these people would give birth to a premature baby, baby with a handicap, at that point in time the full resources of the medical community would swing into action, and as a result, we could spend far more money treating the consequences of not providing this assistance to these individuals than it would be to treat and to provide the assistance that they need. Therefore, on a dollar and cents basis, it is probably, in my opinion, putting all the humanitarian reasons aside, it's a better deal for this state financially to provide this kind of assistance than not to do so. It is sort of like not painting the yellow line down the center of the highway trying to save money, sort of like not putting up a stop sign. The other thing I would like to point out is this that at some point in time we are going to have to look at the really hard choices. How do we save the kind of money necessary to weather the long-term problems which we probably are going to face. We are not going to be able to resolve the budget problems by the passage of LB 20, and I recognize that out in the country, State of Nebraska, back in your district and mine, nothing sells better than stamping out welfare fraud. If there is fraud out there,...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...let's stamp it out. If there is someone in the department that is not doing their job, replace them. If there is a really serious case of neglect or other malfeasance, don't tolerate it, but we ought not to take it out on the back of the recipient of the needed care. I just hope that today, as we concentrate on this bill, we do not lose sight of the greater obligation, and that is the necessity of making major substantial long-lasting cuts in the expenditures of the State of Nebraska. The only way that can be done, eventually will have to be done, we have done it before in 1986 when we had across-the-board cuts and we seriously and conscientiously reduced the size of government. We reduced the new programs that we started and we trimmed out the fat from the old ones. When we do that, then we will have the money for the necessary responsibilities of government and not before. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Schmit. Senator Wesely, you are next.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members. I did pass out just before lunch a sheet that went through some of the