

September 30, 1992 LB 1

Department of Social Services has a great number of concerns, one of which is to reduce the number of hours, staff time hours that are spent in record keeping and to increase the availability for patient service of those residents of the home. There's an issue in this area to attempt to reduce the per pupil, per pupil...per patient cost that in Business and Labor Committee that I'm going to be interested in trying to find a partial solution to. This particular nursing home that's mentioned on this has a per bed cost for workers' compensation insurance alone that amounts to \$700 per patient on an annual basis. This is something that...and this is done with...in a nursing home that is very attentive to safe work practices and has a very low exposure to injury in the workers' compensation area to their employees. I think to do what is provided for in LB 1, without the Schellpeper amendment, would create even more difficulties for us in supporting the Medicaid portion of the elderly community in Nebraska in future years than what we currently have. I do think that we need to look at many, many ways that exist out there in reducing the cost of health care for the elderly, which is a significant budget exposure for us. It's a responsibility that we have assumed when we moved from home care to unit care of the elderly, when our family structure divided and we no longer take care of mom and dad at home but rather expect them to be cared for in some other type of situation. So, having said that, I would encourage your serious consideration of the Schellpeper amendment and certainly would hope for its adoption. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Coordsen. Senator Moore.

SENATOR MOORE: Mr. Speaker and members, just to explain from a financial impact what's happening if you do this; you remember the Governor proposed a variety of things in Social Services, one of which was the administrative function, proposing some reductions there. What Senator Schellpeper's amendment does is actually put this money back in and let's the administrative powers that be make that decision as time goes on which is neither here nor there, whatever the body wants to do. The only thing is if you put the money back in, obviously, that decreases your number but it doesn't...it doesn't impact on the ability of the administration to make the cut and, obviously, if you don't like what they do between now and January, you can always come back in and put the money in. The only thing I would have to mention if you do this, I think, to compare apples to apples, we ought to decrease the Governor's 118 million dollar number, as