

alcohol counselor the School for the Hearing Impaired in Omaha came to me with a young lady who had an alcohol problem and was deaf from birth, and they had asked the treatment center if there was any counselors who would like to or be interested in working with a deaf person because we had nobody in the hospital that had any experience. When they came to me and asked me if I would, I said, yes, I would be glad to because I thought it would be fun, and I don't use fun in a distorted type of way but having fun in the type of work that I do and most of the things I've done in my life is one of the things I want to have. And I met this young lady and we went through treatment. Her treatment was not good because I could not communicate with her. I learned little bits of sign. I've taken a couple classes since. I've helped start some self-help meetings in the Omaha area for hearing impaired, but I still can't communicate anywhere near what I'm supposed to to give this kind of service. This bill does not answer all them problems but it is a step towards the right direction. We need to do something more to help this population in getting mental health and substance abuse treatment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. The Chair recognizes Senator Coordsen.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body, comments that I have are not directed in opposition to this bill because I believe that it is one of the fundamentals of any civilized society that we provide assistance to those that help them...that cannot help themselves. But as...since I'm not a member of Health and Human Services, there are some questions I would like to ask Senator Crosby, if I may, that would help me to understand the problem just a little better.

SENATOR CROSBY: All right.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Senator Crosby, would you respond?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Crosby.

SENATOR CROSEY: Sure, of course.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Is there a program like this for the blind?

SENATOR CROSBY: Well, off the top of my head, Don Wesely might be able to...