

desperate situation because he was away from home, friends and schoolmates. You can imagine how traumatic that would be for any 12-year-old child to have to go to an out-of-state placement, and children are sent for other reasons to out-of-state placements. But I think that brings home...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Time.

SENATOR CROSBY: ...it brought home to me the fact that families are up against it in trying to help their children. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Crosby. The Chair recognizes Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Madam President, members of the body, I guess I...Senator Wesely, I don't know whether you'll be prepared. I was talking to Senator Beutler here about how many we have in the state that may be hearing-impaired. He used the figure of 170,000. Our book says about 6,600. I would think 10 percent is plenty high, of 170,000, but I'm not sure where the figure may lie. Do you have any information on that or...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Senator Wehrbein, yeah, okay. Senator Wehrbein, yeah, I'm looking at the same figures and I don't know where Senator Beutler got his but mine coincide with yours. I don't think we're talking about 170,000. I think this 7,000 sounds more reasonable to me.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Well, he said he was given that figure and I won't dwell on that except to think it does have something to do with this particular program. I'm simply going to say it's difficult to argue against programs like this that, obviously, are worthwhile and are needed in areas of our population and I'm simply going to remind you that if this passes, this will, there will be an A bill following. This will take its place in May sometime, along with the rest of our budget. But this is a fairly significant expansion within this budget of approximately \$400,000 and you will have to decide individually how, I feel, how you think this will fit into the budget as we come down to May, whether this will be an expansion with an additional request, whether you will cut somewhere else in order to allow for this or what. And I'll leave that up to you at this point. It would be proper many times to say let's let this advance and