

didn't cover as many people as I had hoped and so this bill takes us from 25 up to 50 employees. Now what that means is that instead of 192,000 employees potentially being covered under the act, we're going up to 271,000. And we go from about 25 percent of the employees to about 35 percent of the employees, so this bill impacts approximately 80,000 Nebraskans who now will have, I think, better health insurance as a result. This means a lot to me. But in terms of firms that are covered, the original bill, between 3 and 25, covered 89 percent of those. This bill only goes up to 94 percent so we really don't cover very many more companies. This really is a small percent more, but those companies have more employees and so a lot more employees will gain the benefits under the bill we passed last year. I would like to protect more employers and employees with the sort of things that were in the bill last year, but there's a problem with ERISA. We have adverse selection problems and I will raise that issue probably later on on this measure, but for now I'd ask your support to go from 3 to 50 instead of 3 to 25 and with the...oh, we also add the emergency clause because they're now implementing the bill from last year and they want to have all this in place so that when they move forward and put the final rules and regulations and all the procedures in place in the next few months that this bill will be in place and have the E clause. So again, I'd ask your support for LB 837. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Schimek.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, Mr. President, members of the body, Senator Wesely, sometimes you come awake on the floor after you've been kind of in a fog, I guess, but I just woke up on this. And I need to ask you a couple of questions about LB 1222 that we passed last year and then about this bill. LB 1222, as I understand it, and my memory is a little foggy on this, LB 1222 did eliminate some mandates. Is that correct?

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: No, it didn't eliminate mandates. What it did was it added child immunization.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: That was it?

SENATOR WESELY: Yeah.