

couple of years ago from the trial attorneys which was attempting to provide for them to have a higher status in the order in which their costs were covered under any sort of settlement agreement in various court cases versus the position of a hospital lien, which was granted in the 1920s. We took the step, as a Legislature, to give priority to hospitals and other medical providers to have their liens be given a priority status in settlement cases. The committee, the Health and Human Services Committee killed that legislation. We felt that the statutes that we'd had for 65 years or more had appropriately recognized that when an individual is injured, a party is injured, and a settlement is reached on covering the costs of care for that individual, among other types of provisions in the settlement, that the provider of the care to that individual should be compensated for the care given to them. And so we took that position. I think almost it was unanimously two years ago. Well, then this very issue went before the State Supreme Court and the court took a different position. They thought that, in fact, the attorneys involved should have a priority status and not the hospitals and the medical providers of care. This turned on its ear the status of the law as we had had it in the State of Nebraska for, as I said, since the 1920s. And this has been of great concern to the hospitals in our state who have benefitted from and I think in turn been able to provide medical care to the individuals of this state without question when they have need for it, and the loss of millions of dollars to the various hospitals that provide this care has concerned them greatly. So LB 172 was introduced and I want to thank Senator Jensen for picking it as a priority bill because we are talking here about an issue that means, as I said, millions of dollars to the hospitals in the State of Nebraska. And what this bill does is essentially maintain the fact and acknowledge the fact that the State Supreme Court does provide for attorneys to be compensated for the services they provide to an individual whose taken a claim to court and reached a settlement. But it also says that we will not lose a priority status for the physicians, the nurses, and hospitals claiming a lien under the section of law that we've had in place since 1920s, so they don't lose the chance to be compensated for the care that they provide. So what we thought that we were doing with this proposal is accommodating the concerns of attorneys that has been addressed by the Supreme Court but not losing the concerns and the priority status that had been in place all these years for hospitals and lawyers, excuse me, hospitals and other medical providers under the lien laws that we had in the state. So that