

do not need those in the bill any longer. I would be happy to answer any questions you have about the committee amendments. They highlight a number of the concerns that were brought forward at the hearing and number of concerns that had been expressed over the course of the last two years as we've studied welfare reform. I would urge your support for the committee amendments and again be happy to answer any questions you have.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Madam President, the first amendment I have to the committee amendments is by Senator Hall.

SENATOR CROSBY: Senator Hall is excused at the moment. Is there anyone on the floor who is authorized to carry the Hall amendment? So we'll pass over that one. Is there another one, Mr. Clerk?

CLERK: Senator Witek would move to amend. (AM1560 appears on page 1582 or the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR CROSBY: Senator Witek.

SENATOR WITEK: Madam Chairman, members of the body, my first amendments, I'm sorry, I didn't think we'd come up this quickly. I'm passing out a piece of paper that explains four amendments that I have to the committee amendments. The first amendment that I have deals with the section that discusses universal health care. It's intent language in the committee amendment. It strikes the entire portion discussing the availability of health insurance to all Nebraskans by July 1, 1999. It's instructing the Governor. To me, we already have health care available to all Nebraskans. Right now, today, it is available. You have to pay for it but it is available to all Nebraskans and, unless Senator Wesely understands that that's the case right now, and we really don't need language in our welfare reform bill to clarify that that's the case right now. I believe possibly from other discussions that we've had that your intent and your disappointment with universal health care from the federal government, that your intent then is to somehow find a way for the state to fill in that, in your mind, vacuum that was left and attempt to have universal health care similar to what was being discussed at the federal level here in Nebraska and you're instructing the Governor via this language to find a way to do that by July 1, 1999. I see no reason why we need