

this language in our welfare reform bill. I see no reason why, first of all, it's any different than...it's already available to all Nebraskans and it's just redundant if that's your purpose to even put that in the bill at all, and if your purpose is other than that, to have somehow health insurance paid for by the government by July 1, 1999, then I very vehemently disagree with that and want to strike it from the bill because of that. So I would hope that Senator Wesely would explain his...and I understand it's a committee amendment, but if any member of the committee would like to explain why they feel that we have to instruct our Governor to have health insurance available to all Nebraskans when it's already available to all Nebraskans, you just have to get out there and pay for it, by July 1, 1999, I would appreciate that. Otherwise, I see no reason to have this instruction to our Governor in the intent language of the welfare reform bill and my amendment, 1560, strikes Section 14, on page 5 of the committee amendments, starting with line 15, and I would hope that you would vote for that amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Witek. We have a list of speakers who turned their lights on before the Witek amendment, so I'll ask if you want to speak on the Witek amendment. Senator Bohlke, on the Witek amendment.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Madam President, members, Senator Wesely, there you are, in answer to Senator Witek's questions on health care, as we look at the wording, I see that we use the wording "should be available". Is that the wording we want, or do we want the wording "affordable"? It seems to me that there would be a distinct difference.

SENATOR CROSBY: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Yes. Senator Bohlke, we do talk about that all Nebraskans have access to affordable health insurance and so you're right, that's on line 23 of the one page, so we do include that. But you're right, it's more or less of an attempt to try...you can probably go out if you have enough money, you can buy health insurance. Actually, that is not true. With the CHIP program...

SENATOR WITEK: Right.

SENATOR WESELY: ...we have, you can, but without that you would