

say that the doors are open because if you get enough money then you can go to court, that is cynical, that is hypocritical, it is unethical, it is highly dishonest. In this bill, we are dealing with impoverished people. There are individuals working who cannot afford insurance for themselves or their families. There are large corporations which are hooking up with these temporary worker outfits so that they can get individuals to work the equivalent number of hours that would make that individual a full-time employee, but by calling them temporary no benefits need be provided. The state is even doing this to some extent. I don't know which benefits they have lopped off from these people who are called temporary workers. But the whole idea is to get away from providing insurance and health care to people who really need it. In a country such as Nebraska, in a state which this one pretends so often to be, I hear people stand on this floor and talk about the compassion of the people of Nebraska and of this state. Then to stand on this floor and cynically say that insurance is available for everybody, of course, you have to pay for it, knowing that there are people who cannot pay for it, is something that we ought not to fall for this morning. This amendment does not do nearly what I would like to see it do, but it states a policy and a goal and I think every society, when they know that there are illnesses of a catastrophic nature or even a noncatastrophic nature which cannot be treated because the people suffering those illnesses are too impoverished, that society has an obligation to do something. Those of us who are able should help those who are not. When the insurance industry understands that the federal government, that state governments are going to look at the whole question of insurance, we may see something done about the premiums charged. But even if that is done, it will still be priced outside the reach of thousands of Nebraskans. The children of people will not be able to receive the medical and health care that they need. I hope that we defeat Senator Witek's amendment. Health care insurance is not affordable. I stay healthy. It's been years since I had insurance. I don't have health care insurance. I had better not get sick. Of course, if I had insurance, I probably wouldn't go to a hospital if I were sick or trust my hands...put my life in the hands of a doctor, but there are people who must do that. The cost of health care, in other context when we discuss it, is always mentioned in terms of running out of control.

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.