

think there are those that have always kept a close, close eye on this situation or there isn't enough support within the body to change it, which very well could be the case, or there isn't...and in addition to that there isn't public support for a change that fundamentally will increase the number of people that will increase the costs, which I only bring up because I think the reason why the Legislature addressed this issue last year and got involved in welfare reform, the reason why it's back before us again, as a state Legislature. The reason why it's on the front burner at the federal level is because the costs have gone up to such an extent that it's become a real issue to those who pay the bill, to those out...the taxpayers that we've...that we've mentioned to a certain extent this morning but because those who have paid the bill are only willing to do it to a point which brings us back to what I think Senator Crosby was trying to visit about and that's something that not only this society but societies for generations have debated and tried to deal with and that's how can we, as a society, provide assistance to those less fortunate. This is not a new question. It's centuries old. And so what we're wrestling with right now is, is government the answer in the way to go about addressing this question? And our recent history of the last 25 years would say, no, that it's not been an effective way to improve how we provide assistance to those less fortunate. That's why we're looking at making reform to that system. So I hope that people recognize that we need to continue to address this in a very global fashion but what we're doing with this particular section of the committee amendments will broaden the pool which will, I think a fair assumption, increase the number of people which, because of the costs of the programs increasing, will increase the dollar amounts, which means we're going to have to do an even better job in other areas to do what the taxpayers want and that's to get a handle on the level of assistance that government is providing to the less fortunate so that those aspects nongovernmental that are trying to work...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: ...in this area can continue to meet that very laudable goal of how we're going to take care of those less fortunate. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator McKenzie.