

nursing home. So if you wait and don't do anything about it and don't prescreen, they come in, in a few years, in a few months they end up Medicaid eligible and there they are and we pay the bill. Well I don't think that's fiscally sound. I think if you want to contain costs on Medicaid you need to find a way to stop people from going into nursing homes that don't need to be there and find a way to help them stay in their own home. Maybe they don't need any additional assistance. They need some changes in terms of whatever help...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...Meals on Wheels, different things like that and maybe they need a nurse to come out, maybe a personal aide to come out, but whatever it takes it's going to be less than \$25,000 a year and then we save money by taking that step. The whole idea is that to get a handle on nursing home care, to get a handle on Medicaid care and the costs associated with it, we've got to be much more cautious on how many people go into nursing homes. Again, if you look at the one-sheet handout I've got, you'll see we have a high rate of nursing home placement, yet our elderly are in better shape and better health than most over 65 in this country. We emphasize nursing homes too much in this state and it's at our own expense because the costs go up as we over utilize nursing homes. So again, I emphasize to you, this is a very important part of the Medicaid package we passed a couple of years ago, let's not backtrack off of it. Let's look at this idea, try it in the pilots and my pledge to Senator Bohlke is that if we find that this isn't working, we can back off of it before the plan goes statewide in two years. But without trying it out, we'll never know and I'm asking for the chance to at least try it out and see if it will work.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Bohlke.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Madam President and members, as I said, I hope we're all listening to this, and I mean so that we understand what is going to be happening in your hospitals with people who are ready to go home or be dismissed. Without my amendment we will be going in to all those people who are being dismissed and rather right now the hospitals do the screening. Instead we will have the Department of Aging come and we will have to wait for someone from the Department of Aging to get to the hospital. They will then go to the room of the patient and I'll ask Senator Wesely how they're going to get this information, but