

help them and nobody is trying to intrude on anybody's lives. But these individuals and others out there that come and ask for assistance from Medicaid and we have to pay the bill as taxpayers, is it unfair for us to find out whether or not it's necessary to make that expense of 25,000 a year, if we can find better services for 2,000 a year that will keep them in their home which is where they want to be? Is that wrong? That's what we're talking about here. This isn't taking the wrong direction, this is the right direction and I don't think it's an intrusion to ask for some basic information. We're not going to ask them to pull out their IRS forms. That's why you do it in a pilot, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Let's not wait till we go statewide to try out an idea. You try out ideas in the pilot side. You see whether they will work. You see whether there is a chance to accomplish something and if it doesn't work, we'll back off, no problem. But in the meantime, you're giving up on this before we have a chance and I'm telling you there is a possibility that we can save significant amounts of money here and I don't know what...you know, the whole thing of what you're trying to appeal to is those that are concerned about the elderly, let's not intrude on their lives. Well nobody wants to intrude on their lives, but we want to be careful and if we can serve their needs without having to stick them in a nursing home and we can take care of them in their own home and we can do it for cheaper, they win and we win. This is a win-win opportunity here and to me that's what we need to accomplish and the only way to do that, if you wait till they're Medicaid eligible, that's too late. Too many people end up very quick fashion losing their money, their savings and they end up being Medicaid eligible after they've been in a nursing home a short period of time. If you want to save money in the program, you've got to include those that are about to be Medicaid eligible. I again ask you to oppose the Bohlke amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Madam President, members of the Legislature, I rise to support Senator Bohlke's amendment. You know, pilot program or not, this is offensive to many elderly and believe me, my mother would be one of them who went from the hospital to a nursing home, certainly would add to her distress which was enough to do this to have to submit her finances to a government bureaucracy and how presumptuous to think that these people are not going to be able to plan with their families. People who spend their own money, I think are going to be far