

SENATOR BEUTLER: Probably, okay, than' you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Janssen.

SENATOR JANSSEN: Thank you, Madam President and members of the body. As you may recall, LB 718 was my priority bill last year. I wish I had the file on 718 up here but I don't, and our concerns at that time was for the local pharmacies being able to...being able to compete with the mail-order pharmacies. I still believe that that is a problem. With the committee amendments, some of the problems have been taken away, and it was never...never my intent or Senator Bohlke's intent at that time of introducing any hardships upon or inflicting any hardships on these people with long-term illnesses. At that time, we argued the fact that 180-day prescriptions were really not in the best interest of patients, and doctors, as a rule, don't prescribe the 180-day prescriptions. But beings we had made the commitment at that time, I am speaking for myself, and I don't know what Senator Bohlke thinks about this, we did...we did make the commitment that if this was intended...our intention was not to harm anybody or put any undue hardships on anyone. We were trying to look out especially for the local businesses and what could have happened in some communities by losing their pharmacies and losing touch with some type of medical expertise, which local pharmacies do deliver in a lot of rural areas. But with the committee amendments, I understand that the pharmacists are not especially happy with it, but they can live with the committee amendments as they now stand, being...having that put into the bill as it is now. I thank you very much for the time, and I give the rest of my time to Senator Bohlke, if she would like to respond.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Bohlke.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Thank you, Senator Janssen. Madam President and members, as Senator Janssen talked about 718 last year, certainly at that time, there was...it shows how a citizen Legislature really does work. There was a constituent who was very concerned about those people on maintenance drugs and the cost, and the pledge was made at that time to that person that if they could demonstrate that it really was going to be terribly burdensome, we would come back again this year and correct that situation. Persistence does pay off. I heard from him throughout the summer months, and throughout this session,