

been a rather contentious subject. Again, I want to stress that none of us that are opposing it are opposed to Foster Care Review Board. I think the opposition is moving too quickly and not knowing what we're going to do. We discussed duplication during our interim study. That was the area we were trying to work on. I do appreciate Senator Landis and Senator Avery coming and trying to work a compromise with us, but I've got to tell you Senator Landis is really good at this. The original bill called for the transfer of five employees January of 1996. In the compromise, we're going to transfer six employees in October of '95. Somehow it's not quite working out to be the compromise that we wanted it to be. We're still very concerned about the cost. We're unable to get some figures of the total numbers of reviews that are done by Foster Care. We are unable to get some of the information from them. Senator Dierks was concerned that we address the needs of all children. We know that is happening now through the PPR. We don't know that's going to happen with the Foster Care Review Board, if they're going to be able to meet this need and review all the children. I think we're going to have more children falling through the cracks and we're going to have nowhere to go, and this is of great concern to me. I think we also need to look, as we talk about staffing and putting more people in foster care. Foster care has had a high turnover in their employees, much higher than what we've had in the Department of Social Services. Are we going to be able to keep those individuals trained there and working? Again, maybe all these things can be worked out. I don't think anybody is saying they can't. I don't think we can do it now. I think the bracket motion is the best thing we can do; work on it over the summer again. We did have the two groups working together. I will tell you the Department of Social Service is not adverse to someone else doing the PPRs. They're not in there fighting tooth and nail for these jobs. That's not the point. They want to make sure, when it's done, it's done right, that we aren't losing children through the cracks, that we aren't putting federal funding in jeopardy. I really get nothing but cooperation from them as what they want to do, but their thought still is to do what's best for the children also. And I think we have to get the two groups working together and try some different ideas and see what we can get worked out. I would really like to continue the process that we got started and would urge you to vote for this bracket motion. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Day. Senator Vrtiska.