

May 22, 1995

LB 399, 693A

SPEAKER WITHEM: You've heard the motion. All in favor say aye. Opposed. The bill is readvanced. LB 693.

CLERK: Mr. President, 693A

SPEAKER WITHEM: LB 693A.

CLERK: LB 693A, Senator Wesely would move to return the bill for specific amendment. (See AM2413 on page 2406 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. Actually this somewhat ties into the theme we are having with federal preemption of the states in some ways. The federal government has...is a senior partner in the Medicaid program. We can't do very much in terms under the State of Nebraska without permission from the federal government. We get that permission through a process we all are familiar with known as waivers. We have been working for over two years on moving toward a managed-care plan for the State of Nebraska in the Medicaid program. We feel that it will provide better care for those individuals covered by Medicaid, and will reduce costs of the program. However, recently we've seen some difficulty in finalizing approval of the waiver requests from the Department of Social Services, the State of Nebraska, and now it is uncertain that we will be able to get approval in time for us to meet the statutory deadline of July 1 of this year to implement or to move forward with the managed-care plan for Medicaid. So the amendment that I am asking you to return the bill to amend into with the permission of Senator Warner, and I appreciate his assistance on this, says, basically, that we will have the program in operation within 40 days...45 days following the receipt of the required waiver or waivers under the federal program, Medicaid program. So, essentially, the trigger on this now won't be a calendar date but a date triggered by the federal decision to grant us the waiver. There are actually two waivers, the general managed-care plan for Medicaid, and then the plan for mental health, in particular. The first waiver has already, response has already come back from the federal government and an answer to that has gone back. The second is going out today in terms of mental health. We just got the latest questions on that. The thought is that this should be by