

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Is there, I appreciate your...

SENATOR WESELY: Oh, sure.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: ...responses. So do we, and do the citizens of the state have, do we have any idea whether we are looking at the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving, or Christmas when we might be able to move forward in this particular area?

SENATOR WESELY: Well, right now it is anybody's guess. We've had some indications that we'll hear back as quickly as possible, which could mean a few weeks and could mean longer than that. It is really uncertain, and whether they finally approve it is uncertain at this point too. I mean I think it will... I have every confidence that it will finally be approved because almost every state has now gone to managed care, but, evidently, there are some problems that have arisen.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: So then their approval is not contingent upon the contracts that are being negotiated?

SENATOR WESELY: No, no, no, they are not looking at it from that perspective.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Okay, and then, and do you feel as though the State of Nebraska has expedited this as quickly as possible?

SENATOR WESELY: I think not. I think we could have moved more quickly. You know this is something we passed in '93, and two years time seemed much longer than we thought. We put a maximum date, July 1, thinking we'd easily reach that point, but, you know, it has not moved as quickly as I thought it ought. So we are kind of blaming the federal government, but in part I think the state agencies have to take some responsibility for not having sent in the waiver applications sooner than they did.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Thank you very much, Senator.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. : Senator Wesely, you are recognized to close on your amendment.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Again, this is another one of those situations where we don't...we don't have really much choice. We can move forward and meet the statutory deadline of July 1,