

women with young children that are working. And Nebraska in general has a very high percent of our women with children working in the work force. The child care, you may not think of it this way but Nebraska when you talk about child care, it's probably more important to this state than any other state in the country and the reimbursement is so low and the impact of that is so negative we have to address and try to upgrade and improve the reimbursement for child care. So again, I guess I'm arguing almost against the amendment, but I'm going to rise in support of it because I think it's a reasonable compromise and it maintains the intent and the thrust of the committee amendment but it's still woefully inadequate. I hope in the future we will try to do what we can as a Legislature to improve the reimbursement to child workers, not just through the welfare program, but in general because this is a problem that is a serious one that we need to address. Thank you.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Chambers is up next and yields his time to Senator Hall.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President and members. Senator Wehrbein, would you respond to a question?

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR HALL: Senator Wehrbein, what is the current reimbursement rate?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: I do not know that. Maybe Senator Wesely does. I have the total amount spent but I don't have the reimbursement rate, Senator Wesely. (sic)

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. And that I think explains the whole issue as to why I'm opposed to this amendment because frankly we don't know what we're doing to the...we know that there is a dollar figure out there. We don't know how it reflects in the form of the child care workers that are out there that are being reimbursed. We don't know what it means in terms of how many kids that are being taken care of, but yet we're going to in essence say, because frankly, one could argue that the Wehrbein amendment, and I'm not sure it even does that, would in essence require that there be an increase. The language that's in the bill just says that the department shall adjust the reimbursement rate. It doesn't say whether it should be up or down based on the results of the study. The concept