

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...to just get the meaning of it. Okay.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: We're both trying to educate everyone here, aren't we?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Well I figure maybe everybody knows what it means, but I just want to make it clear to them what I intend to do in discussing what they already know. Now if the Legislature chooses to go above 75 percent, Senator Wehrbein, there is nothing in federal law to prohibit the state from going above what the federal government sets as its maximum for reimbursement, is there?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: I'm not sure of that. I have to check that. If we want to...you know their maximum reimbursement would be 75 percent, whether ours would be allowable of that, I'm not sure. I would have to verify that statement. I don't know that.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay. Well I'm sure it would be because the states are always allowed to go beyond the federal government but the government says this is as much as I will give of it. If you want to go beyond it, you can. Assume for the sake of argument that what I'm saying is correct. With my amendment, if a Legislature would come into being which would recognize the importance of child care being available, recognizing that if there is not a reasonable rate that the people in child care can expect to receive when they care for the children of the people we're talking about, and that Legislature decided that 75 percent of the market rate is not enough and will go to 87 percent, under Senator Wehrbein's amendment that could not be done. With my amendment, it could. My amendment makes the 75 percent the floor and that's what I think we ought to do to ensure a known, quantifiable amount, or let me say this, a definitely determinable amount. Now to try to state it, not succinctly, but succinctly. Senator Wehrbein's amendment as drafted would say that no more than 75 percent of the market rate could be reimbursed. Mine would say no less than that amount and I think if we're trying to create a viable system of care, this that I'm offering is the minimum we should do and it may not be adequate. But to leave in place a maximum of 75 percent, allowing any rate less than that to me makes a mockery of the whole concept of reimbursement. So I hope you will consider this amendment and adopt it.