

check in. Mr. President, members, this amendment is brought to you by myself, Senator Brown, Senator Wehrbein, Senator Schimek, Senator Bohlke, Senator Maurstad, Senator Beutler. It's our attempt to reach a compromise on the issues raised on this matter. I think there's still some confusion about it and I thought we made it clear, but I know it's not a very simple issue. Senator Witek talked about we're trying to tamper with the market. All we're trying to do is recognize and follow the market, not fall so far behind as we did, as I mentioned, you know, in the late eighties where we have an inability to get anybody to provide care for these children and these families. So by recognizing that the market changes and trying to simply have our rate of reimbursement follow in some fashion with that market, and recognize that the market has changed, we're not trying to tamper with the market, we're just trying to respond to it and keep up with it to some degree. When I say keep up with it what we're talking about here is we can't go higher than 75 percent, and all we're suggesting with that maximum, there ought to be a minimum of not below 60 percent, that's what the amendment calls for. This will allow the flexibility to the Appropriations Committee to determine at what level we're at, could be at 60, could be at 65, 70, could be up to 75 percent. They'll be able to know what monies are available and the costs involved and the impact. I think they'll have the flexibility that they need to have and at the same time we'll know that we'll not fall so far behind, below that 60 percent level, we ended up with situations where you simply could not get anybody to provide care in some areas. And then we had serious problems with these ADC mothers and families that not only were on welfare but wanted to get off of welfare and couldn't get anybody to take care of their kids because the reimbursement was so low. Again, the market, we have to recognize there's a market out there. The other thing I want to reemphasize is even at the 60 to 75 percentile we are talking about an under reimbursed service. Child care providers provide very important care for our children, they're the lowest paid of the occupations that were surveyed in that handout that I gave to you, the lowest paid, very poorly paid individuals for very important work. So it seems to me that this effort to recognize that we ought not fall so far behind that then we get...have to catch up and the cost is so high that the budget is impacted so tremendously, rather than do that the idea is to try and keep up, to some degree, and do it within a range that makes sense. The 60 to 75 percent makes sense to me, it makes sense to the cosponsors of this amendment and I'd ask your support for the