

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Senator Lindsay, you're recognized to open on your amendment.

SENATOR LINDSAY: Thank you, Mr. President and members. This amendment is being copied, it should be coming around here in just a second. The...what the amendment would do...it affects the same area as the amendment we just voted on, but it handles it a little bit differently. What it would say is that after the...when you've reached the family cap, that there would be no more assistance, except you would be allowed assistance in the form of a voucher to be used only for those items that the department specifies. Meaning it would allow the department to specify that that additional assistance, once you've reached the family cap, would...could be...or would be given to families and could be used for those items that are specified by the department. A second part of the amendment would require that the department apply for a waiver to allow this to be done. We've been advised by the department that federal law doesn't allow it to occur. So again it would require that the waiver be filed. That is, in a nutshell, that is what the amendment does, it's intended to recognize that just because you reach that arbitrary number that we happen to select at two, that that doesn't mean that additional children are not going to have additional expense associated with them. There will be additional expense and that is an expense that is going to be borne, or that hardship that is going to be borne by the additional children. If you have a certain number of dollars that can only go around, you reach a point where each child...if you have additional children you reach a point where those dollars are just going to have to be stretched a little bit further. And you reach a point where that stretching no longer can stretch, and you end up with it breaking. When that happens, it's the children who, regardless of what parents have done, it's through no fault of the children that they would be the ones who would experience the pain associated with this type...with this action. What this would allow is recognize that there is an additional expense, but still not have that cashing out that there's been some opposition to, and it would recognize that the department could limit what these are...what the voucher is used for, that would be for those items that are necessary expenses of raising that child. With that, I'd be happy to try to answer any questions and would urge the adoption of the amendment.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Lindsay. Senator