

February 8, 1996 LB 532

read for the first time on January 18th of last year, referred to the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee. They report the bill to General File with committee amendments attached. (See AM2766 found on page 428 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Chair recognizes Senator Landis to open on the committee amendments.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you, Madam President, members of the Legislature. Last year we had a hearing on LB 532 and the testimony was divided, many supporters, but some significant opposition. Over the summer, Senator Brown was effective in negotiating with all parties to arrive at a mutually acceptable conclusion, which constitutes the committee amendments, which were advanced seven-zip, a little earlier in the session. What the committee amendment says is that OB-GYNs can serve as primary care physicians in a group health insurance policy contract, and that they will serve as primary care physicians if they meet two circumstances, first, that they otherwise qualify as a primary care physician for the credentialing standards of the entity. So if the group health policy establishes credentials for primary care physicians, an OB-GYN will have to meet the same standards that any other primary care physician would have to meet to meet the policy's standards. And, secondly, that the OB-GYN perform all the functions of a primary care physician. In other words, they have to be able to serve as a primary care physician, not just an OB-GYN who's being designated as a primary care physician. Now the primary care physician is critical in a group health insurance arrangement because, for one thing, these are people that are allowed to do diagnostic tests, and they're the kinds of places where you'd want diagnostic tests done. The most common one is the PAP smear that's done on an annual basis. Lots of people want to have their OB-GYN annual exam, their PAP smear done by an OB-GYN rather than a GP. This will allow that to happen. And it will also allow the OB-GYN, acting as the primary care physician, to then send out a patient to other specialties. They'll serve as the gatekeeper because that's the role that a primary care physician does in a group health insurance program, to serve as the gatekeeper, and to provide basic diagnostic tests at the lowest possible cost. So the committee amendment identifies those two standards that OB-GYNs will have to meet in order to be treated as primary care physicians. But if they meet them, then they will be treated as OB-GYNs...as primary care