

February 12, 1996 LE 1044

with many years of very dedicated and very fine service. So I'm glad that their input is not only being solicited, but it's being welcomed and will be utilized. So that, as well as the client input, I think is very important. With that, I thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Preister. Senator Engel.

SENATOR ENGEL: Madam Chairman, members of the body, in this particular bill, 1044, I wanted to tell you up front that I'm totally in favor of the intent of it. When I was first appointed, September 1st of 1993, the ink wasn't hardly dry on my appointment when I got a call from two families in Wayne, Nebraska, who had severely handicapped children. And they were having.... What happened is there was about four different agencies handling these families, not one of the agencies knew what the other agency was doing. I went over to Wayne, Nebraska, and talked to these families. I didn't know how to get through the bureaucratic maze, so I called my legislative aide, Kelly Ptacek, and said, this is where I want to go, how do I get there? She found the way. We had a meeting with the Governor's Office, with Mary Dean Harvey, the Department of Social Services, Conn'e Day, Jessie Rasmussen and others who are involved in the process. And as a res.... Give you just a little history of what happened, this happened to be the Katie Beckett Waiver Program, which was part of the other services they were receiving. And what happened, they got a letter and within ten days they were going to take away \$808 a month from this family. You know most families can't handle that. The only notice they had to have, up to this ten day notice, was it had to be in a newspaper, it had to be a notification in a newspaper. In this particular case, the way the situation was then it was...so they used the World-Herald. Now, most of us read it, but everybody doesn't, so this was a complete surprise to these families. So as a result, ever since that has happened we've been working, trying to get the situation settled. And it's still...in fact, yesterday...and different ones are helping with that right now. But the thing is, I guess what I want to emphasize here is that I know any piece of legislation of this magnitude is going to need a lot of fine tuning, I know that from a little experience I had last year. The only thing is I am totally supportive of this as far as bringing these agencies together so we have more efficient service to those who are receiving the services. And like Senator Crosby said, I don't

10985