

SENATOR WITEK: ...positions, but stay within this amount of money that we've given your agency, and you guys figure out who you're going to pull off the front line in order to fund those positions. I don't think that's...I don't think that's good enough. I don't think that's the wise policy for those individuals who have to go to those agencies. We're talking about the Department of Health, we're talking about the Department of Social Services. There's an awful lot of people who work in these agencies, and there's an awful lot of Nebraskans who work with these agencies, pulling people off the front line is not a policy that I want to be here recommending. And I want you to take a second look at this and realize what this policy change will do, and give you an opportunity to keep it the way it is and allow for the restructuring to go ahead and happen. And if they want fifteen more positions a year from now, after they've gone ahead and initiated these changes, then they can come back and say, we need more flexibility at this time, give us good reason other than, you know, we only got...have to get rid of some of these managers...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Time. Thank you, Senator Witek. Senator Wesely. Excuse me, Senator Withem.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Yeah, I had a question for Senator Wesely was my reason for punching on my light. I see that he's in here. Just to put this in perspective, Senator Wesely, while you're walking to your microphone, this bill calls for how many additional exempt employees than previously existed?

SENATOR WESELY: Madam President, members, well it depends how you put the figures together. But Senator Witek is right in terms of the actual on-line employees. There are currently fifteen authorized for the five agencies that now exist, plus the five directors. This would allow for thirty slots plus the three directors. So, essentially, it's a doubling of the exempt positions.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Okay, and how many total employees are there in this agency?

SENATOR WESELY: There's just under 6,000.

SPEAKER WITHEM: So we're talking about 15 employees out of 5,000, is that what we're talking about?