

Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR CROSBY: Senator Beutler, to open on your amendment.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Crosby, members of the Legislature, this is probably, this is the most important amendment I have, and I really think the most important thing that you have to consider on this bill at this stage of debate. It is the amendment that would delay the consolidation date or the actual date at which time these different agencies would be consolidated and divided up into three agencies from January 1, 1997 to July 1, 1997. And the whole point of that is simply to give us an opportunity, one, to review the plan that is to come to us by December 1, 1996, later this year. And on the basis of that plan to reflect upon whether we have any additional considerations with regard to this particular proposition. Let me back up a moment and say where I'm coming from. I'm in favor of this bill, I'm in favor of giving this a try. I have to be candid with you and tell you that the main reason I'm in favor of giving it a try is because I believe in the leadership that's now in charge of this effort. That leadership is critical to whatever happens. There is nothing in the country that necessarily suggests that this kind of effort will be successful. It has certainly been less than successful in some other states in the Union. Furthermore, the particular type of division that's being done, that is a division into regulatory, programmatic, and financial, to my knowledge has not been tried elsewhere. And so we are charting a new course with respect to the way we are trying to do it, not only trying to make a success out of just merger itself. That being the case, it seems to me that our legislative duty is to be sure that we've looked at this in enough detail that we can be assured that the leadership is on the right course and that we're comfortable with what they're doing. I may remind you that a few years ago, most of you were in this Legislature when we took off on managed care and authorized tremendous changes in the area of managed care. And we've had, as I think most of you are aware, very significant problems have developed. I don't know necessarily that it's because the legislative bill itself that directed that change didn't go into it far enough. But I do know this, that we didn't follow the process far enough to be sure that the leadership in charge was effectively taking us to the place that we said we wanted to go. Consequently, today in managed care we have a whole number of very major problems. So all I'm