

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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take a figure, and, understand, I'm pulling this out of the air because it has absolutely no basis in fact, but just to give you a comparison, let's say we took 1,000 individuals who are receiving care in this state; you gave that family \$200 a month in respite care that this state provided, you're talking a little over \$4 million, about \$4,400,000 in expenditures. If you take those same 1,000 individuals and took them out of the home and put them within an institutionalized or another type of setting with an average cost of 45 to \$48,000 a year, you're talking about 45 to \$48 million in cost. I think you can very clearly, very quickly understand why this investment is so important. And I'd like for a moment for you to think in terms...I am...out of habit, my very last reading before I go to bed every night is to pick up the local section of the Lincoln paper and the Midlands section of the Omaha World-Herald, and I go through the obituaries and I go through all of the court activity that is listed in those papers, and last night as I was reading this about 11:30 at night, I noticed that there was an individual who as part of his sentence had been given the punishment, now understand, the punishment of house arrest for 30 days; punishment of house arrest for 30 days. Now envision for a moment, I don't think you'll need to close your eyes to get a mental picture of this, of having yourselves placed in a situation of being under house arrest, not for 30 days, or for 60 days, or for 90 days, but possibly for a year, two years, three years, because, believe me, fellow members of the Legislature, these are the type of circumstances that caregivers are under without respite. They are under house arrest. Remember, the courts punish you with house arrest. These are family caregivers who...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR BYARS: ...who so lovingly give of the type of care and help that their spouses, their family members deserve and are so in need of. It's not without fiscal cost. To get this program organized, to find the services necessary to provide respite care, it's going to cost us approximately \$500,000 a year for the next two years. There are certain funding streams available now that many families don't have the slightest idea that they can access. By organizing through LB 148 a system of identifying those resources, we're going to be able to invest in