

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

February 19, 1999 LB 226

medical practice. We have agreement on this by...by all of those people who practice medicine and who would be called upon to make these decisions, and I would ask for your approval of the amendment to the committee amendments.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Before we begin debate on the amendment, Senator Jones is proud to announce he has the following guests visiting the Legislature this morning. They are ten, five through eighth grade students from Wellsville, Kansas, but also is Senator Jones' son, Vernon, and his two grandsons, of Senator Jones, Kenneth and Michael. They're here with the principal, and they are underneath the south balcony. Would you please stand up, be recognized the Nebraska Legislature. Debate on the Byars amendment to the committee amendment, Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I would ask Senator Byars, would you state briefly again what your amendment does? I was trying to get it on my gadget and I couldn't call it up and my "right hand" was not here.

SENATOR BYARS: Certainly, Senator Chambers, be happy to respond. In the bill and in the committee amendments, what...we wrote the language too tight so that the only person that could administer these drugs was a physician, and we have broadened that language so that the physician can prescribe, dispense, or administer, and we added language under the nurses license act to allow nurses to do the same.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. That's what I thought you had said, but I was looking through the committee amendments because, frankly, I am almost flabbergasted that an amendment with this much merit could come out of any committee of the Nebraska Legislature. Senator Jensen, I am pleased; Senator Hilgert, I am humbled by the work that has been done on this bill. It would be very easy for any of us to say that a doctor or a healthcare professional, out of compassion, should disregard the possibility of sanctions and just go ahead and help somebody who is in such extreme circumstances as can happen when you're suffering acute or chronic pain or both, an acute pain which is chronic. But what we also need to realize, that if your livelihood and that of your family and those who depend on you could be stripped away if you place an act of compassion,