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LB 514

bill then if we get mired down and tangled up in all of these other parts of the bill, we would still have time to work our way through that. But if this is not accepted, then I see no need for LB 514, being quite frank. I don't know what else to say at this point, so I will see if there are any questions. What I am going to do, though, is to share with all of the members a copy of a letter that I received from the Public Service Commission in response to some questions I had posed to them. In reading that letter, some things may be clearer to you, because the letter will explain in more detail. I should tell you that Health and Human Services have helped identify 65,000 individuals who are eligible.

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Fifteen thousand something have applied, but because they live...several of them may live in the same household where there's one phone, not all of them receive the benefits. So about 13,000-plus persons are receiving this benefit. Five times 13 is about 65,000, so 20 percent of the people eligible are receiving it. Something has to be done to promote this program to make people aware of the fact that this kind of assistance is available. But I'm going to hand that letter around and, if there are questions, I hope you will feel free to ask them.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Discussion on the Chambers amendment? Senator Bromm.

SENATOR BROMM: Thank you, Madam President. I think Senator Chambers is addressing an issue that should be of concern to all of us and several senators have spoken to me in private about their concerns about people with lower incomes being able to afford phone service and what's going to happen to them as a result of, quote, unquote, deregulation. I'm sorry. Madam President, could I have a gavel? I just can't hear.

SENATOR CROSBY: (Gavel.) Senators, please take...keep your conversations down or take them off the floor so we may hear the speaker.

SENATOR BROMM: Senator Chambers' amendment would exempt the