

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

March 2, 1999

LB 514

Lifeline--if you're receiving any of those benefits. But the trouble is, you go in for a Medicaid benefit...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Yeah.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: ...they're not going to tell you, oh, by the way, if you go over to the Public Service Commission or your telephone company you can get Lifeline. They're...it's not a program they deal with. They're just not going to tell you. They don't know and...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Some people, this may be the cam...the straw that broke the camel's back. Is there any way maybe we can get this assistance without having to get the other four or five or whatever? Is there, you know...or is that just a guideline set out by HHS or whomever?

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: No, the guideline is set out basically by the Public Service Commission in their Lifeline and Universal Service Fund packets that you've seen, their study that they've done. We can recreate a whole new bureaucracy and a means testing. Quite frankly, most of that work's already been done. These are tried and true and probably really identify at least 90 percent of the people who truly need it. The problem is there are a lot of people receiving these programs that could be eligible and that aren't. They just have no idea.

SENATOR CUDABACK: It just seems strange to have to make them apply for another assistance program if they don't really want that one but they do need the five or ten dollars they may be getting from this program. It's too bad they have to, you know, apply for the other programs in order to receive this. That just seems a little strange to me, but maybe that's the way it has to work, but maybe...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Well, it's the same as if you go in and you are...you've got some disability and you go in to the Social Security Administration. Social Security's not going to sit down and explain to you all your benefits on the state side. They're going to say, look,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Yeah.