

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

March 11, 1999 LB 148

fund, 30 million of the at least 155 million that we need. It's not very much, but at least it's something. But spending at the level of 3.5 percent increase over last year requires some discipline on our part and it's going to require the cutting off of a number of A bills. And so, when something like this comes along that is fully within the definition of that trust fund, it seems to me we want to make a decision to have the trust fund do it, save the money so we can put something in the rainy day fund and be more fiscally responsible long term in how we handle this. But, having said that, let me ask Senator...Senator Jensen some questions on how he understands the functioning of the Health Care Trust Fund. Now this is...this is where the money...this is what the money would come out of in the event that you did not vote for the amendment. Under the Health Care Trust Fund Act, it sets out what the legislative directives are, what the fund is all about, what the purposes are, that is...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...the scope within which you can judge the integrity of a particular proposed spending proposition. It says the fund's about the preservation and improvement and coordination of the health infrastructure of Nebraska. Now adding a respite care element is adding to the health infrastructure of the state of Nebraska. It says it's about public health. Adding a respite care element is an element of public health, as I understand most definitions of public health. It says a purpose is the development of alternatives to nursing facility care, such as assisted living facility services. Respite care certainly fits into that definition of what the fund is all about. The grant program...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Time. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Yeah. Senator Thompson is pointing out it's just the interest on the fund that that could be used for, but the proposal that's before you that's currently on the bill, except for the initial inclusion of the first year, is forever after dependent on interest only and so, therefore, fits into the structure of the fund also. These grant programs, and this is what's a little unclear to me, Senator, and I wanted to ask you, but, in looking at the description of the grant programs