

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

April 6, 1999

LB 480

work together to see if we can't bring in something that I think would really make a difference to women and families. Thank you.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Senator Crosby. Senator Kiel, please.

SENATOR KIEL: Thank you, Senator Coordsen, members of the Legislature. With all due respect to my male colleagues, I would suggest that there has always been a men's health initiative in this state, and that's part of the reason why, perhaps, now is the time that we ought to bring a women's health initiative, because quite frankly, as Senator Crosby has mentioned, most of the major diseases that afflict the population have been researched based upon a male population as opposed to a female population. We know that the number one killer of women in the United States and in the state of Nebraska is heart disease. We know that it is typically not diagnosed. We know that women typically are more likely to die in the hospital after having a heart attack, because it continues to be undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. We know that heart disease kills more women than the next 17 diseases on the list. And we know that at some point we're going to have to do something's to begin to address the disparity in both the diagnosis and the death rate. We also know that with reference to autoimmune diseases, which include Graves Disease, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, psoriasis, myasthenia gravis, and a number of other of those kinds of autoimmune diseases affect about 12 million Americans, but I don't think very many people know that 75 percent of those 12 million Americans are women. Autoimmune diseases are much more likely to affect...afflict women than men, but there has not been particularly a whole lot of research done on why that happens. We also know that, for example in our own state, in the city of Omaha 27 babies were born alive in the years 1994 and 1996, yet died before celebrating their first birthday. We know that seven in ten of all pregnant women in the region receive prenatal care in the first three months of pregnancy. Almost one-third of African-American mothers under the age of 25 receive no prenatal care in the first trimester. There are things that are happening in this state with regard to healthy babies and healthy mothers and prenatal care that need to be