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LB 480

take advantage of it. We're not talking about a small segment of the population here, we're talking about 52 percent of the population. And if you want to look at the fiscal note and argue that we shouldn't be spending money in this way, I would challenge you to look at a lot of the different agencies and...

SENATOR COORDSEN: One minute.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...departments that we have in Nebraska, and look at the amounts that they are spending on different issues. And I will try to bring that to your attention at a later time in the discussion. Thank you.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Senator Schimek. (Visitors introduced.) Proceeding on our list of speakers then, Senator Matzke, please.

SENATOR MATZKE: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I support LB 480 and I urge all of you to do likewise. There have been some objections raised this morning, primarily financial. For five years I served on the Health and Human Services Committee. We've heard reference to the task force in the Department of Health and Human Services. In all honesty, I have to tell you that in five years I've never seen any evidence of them doing anything positive or beneficial. We do a lot for children's health, we have special programs for the aging in appropriations, we have almost been derelict in our responsibility to the issue of women's health. Just as an example, last year, during testimony before the Health and Human Services Committee, we had a doctor testify as to the average age of a Native American woman who enters the nursing home. The average age of a Native American woman who enters a nursing home in this state is 52, not 62, not 72, 52 years of age. We have problems in the health of women in this state that have not been addressed and have not been looked at, and the emphasis has been missing. And I think this bill, for the small amount of money that it's going to require, is going to focus attention on those issues. More closer to home, I have a female member of my family that has an autoimmune disease that could lead to lupus, this is a disease that more likely than not affects women, and yet there are no answers, even the medical school admits that they haven't focused completely on this disease. We have a lack