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LB 480

SENATOR STUHR: Yes. Yes.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: And I would have to stand in opposition to your amendment because I believe this is an integral and important part of the bill. If you do not have anybody to head the initiative then you're going to go nowhere with the initiative. And just as a "for instance", let me...let me reiterate for you that when this initiative was being discussed within the Department of Health and Human Services, about 40 people came together and discussed the kinds of things that might be done under this bill, and I have been told, even though I wasn't at the meeting, that everyone was saying to everyone else "but I didn't know that you did that; I didn't know that initiative was out there; I didn't know that there was this program." I mean, there are 5,800 employees in the Department of Health and Human Services and the right hand doesn't always know what the left hand is doing, or the right foot or the left foot. I mean there's...there needs to be somebody in charge of this initiative or this initiative will go nowhere and it will fail. Right now, we have a person within the department and she's very good, I would...I would speak very highly of her, who is the point person on women's initiatives within the department, but she has a multitude of tasks to do, so her focus can only be partly on women's issues. And I believe that this amendment would be very detrimental to the bill and I would not support it. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK PRESIDING

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Schimek. Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I would like for you to turn to page 4 of the bill. I believe it points out there that there will be a council and that there will be a chairperson and a vice chairperson of the council. There shall also be two ex-officio, nonvoting members from the Legislature, one of which shall be the chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee. I would point out that if we are looking for direction that this would certainly provide the direction to the council and then, furthermore, to Health and Human Services in this area. It's