

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

April 7, 1999

LB 559

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam President and members of the body. Senator Jones kind of more aptly said what I wanted to say. We heard in the Health and Human Services Committee from numbers of people, and I have stacks of letters of people, who have been able to participate in medical services through telehealth and they were very, very moving and touching stories, people who would not have been able to receive services had they not had this available in their communities. And it ranged from stroke victims being able to take advantage of speech pathology services, to counseling, mental health counseling for people who are experiencing some very traumatic things in their lives. We also received letters from people who, because of their income situation as well as the fact that they could lose their jobs if they had to take a half-day to drive for counseling services, so I support this. I thank Senator Kristensen and Senator Jensen for introducing the bill and making it a priority. I think it is a direction that touches so many people in the state and has so much potential that we should advance the bill today. Thank you.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Thank you, Senator Thompson. Senator Price, on the amendment to the amendment.

SENATOR PRICE: Senator Bohlke and members of the body, thank you, Senator Kristensen, for this piece of legislation. I always strive for legislation that will affect the entire state and the health of the entire state is very, very important. Having rural roots, I know how it is, not just weather but actually, you know, infirmities and age and distance. This bill will help people get better services. And, instead of waiting a month for the specialist to come into the town, now they will be able to get in, get an appointment maybe next week, and begin to address the problems that they have. And I always wonder why some of this wasn't proposed years ago, but it's here, it's before us, and it's very, very important and we must advance this bill. Thank you.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Thank you, Senator Price. There are no further lights. Senator Jensen, to close on the amendment to the amendment.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the