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LB 179

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Time.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...equitableness, we ought to do it.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Coordsen, you're next.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. Philosophically, I don't disagree with Senator Chambers, but with respect to LB 179, that I would suggest that he has missed the mark about as far as the amendment does in this field. This is an issue that I would harken...ask the body to harken to the words of Senator Wehrbein. It's not something to be approached lightly, that formulas have to...would have to be developed, and it's not something that we ought to be passing as an amendment on Select File. There's a reason that this amendment, when it was in bill form, wasn't used, and that was that it was...while it proposed to address a situation that I think deserves the attention of the body, those that...individuals who are incapacitated by either head injury or some other type of mental incapacity to the extent that they're not able to work, not able to perform normal functions or whatever, is an issue that we need to talk about. But it's a complex issue. I'm not going to repeat everything that Senator Wickersham said, because that's the way it is. We've already saw fit to amend the bill to take away from a benefit from low-income elderly, while retaining in this bill a schedule that adds higher income elderly to the eligibility standards. And this is, as I indicated on General File, particularly an issue in Lancaster, Douglas, and Sarpy Counties, where the housing valuations are escalating very dramatically. And we felt that additional help needed to be given to those that were truly needy in this system. Now, the individuals that Senator Robak might reference may, on an individual basis, be truly needy, based upon their mental incapacity and income levels, which, if they were of an age to be qualified or income qualified, they would already be qualified under this bill. We're in an area, in the area that is reflected by Senator Robak's amendment, and I have no problem with talking about it this morning, but it is much more difficult for us to identify for a welfare program, and I still maintain that this is a welfare program and not a