

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

April 9, 1999

LB 179

book which is entitled Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders. Now, if you qualify for any of the 300 and plus mental disorders that are outlined in this book, which includes caffeine addiction, I have caffeine addiction, nicotine addiction, I used to have that, all of these are mental disorders. Heartlessness is a function...I believe that's a physical disorder suffered by one of the senators here in this Chamber, and it's Senator Chambers. But the point that I'm making here is that this is a very, very vague, unenforceable, undiagnosable illness that Senator Robak is attempting to bring into LB 179. It is so vague that it is impossible of enforcement. And when you open the gate to this, there's all sorts of...do you worry? Does anyone here worry about anything? Do you worry about the same subject for more than six months? You have generalized anxiety disorder. This is a recognizable mental illness, ask any psychiatrist. Senator Robak's heart is in the right place, and the amendment is not. If you want to argue this on the basis of diagnosable mental illness, we have just done away with property tax for everyone, which is probably not a bad idea, but this isn't the way to go at it. I urge that you give this the consideration it deserves and then vote against it. Thank you very much.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Chambers, you are next.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Madam President, members of the Legislature. Believe it or not, not everything that Senator Tyson said is off the mark. Most of it is, though, as usual. There is not just the requirement that a person have a mental disability. There is a degree of impairment in terms of being able to function, which also has to be included. So it's not just out there saying somebody could come up and say, I have worried for six months about how I'm going to pay my automobile tax when it comes due, or pay my income tax, or some of the kinds of things that Senator Tyson mentioned. We know that, in trying to argue a weak case, a person will take the worst possible example and present that as though it represents the rule or the generality of what is going to be faced, when in reality that is not the situation at all. I don't believe the fact that a bill of the kind Senator Tyson justifiably gave Senator Robak credit for having brought as far as she has is a