

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

May 3, 1999

LB 355

the borders of Nebraska. As...the largest effect this bill would have was to be keep people from sliding down that terrible road, that slippery slope to disability status. There's no reasons to step back and let that happen. If somebody's diagnosed with cancer, diabetes, or heart condition, we don't treat them so far and then step back and say, oh well. We stick with them. You treat the illness. You treat...you actively treat it. We don't say, okay, you have cancer, we'll give you chemotherapy for one month or one time and then we'll stop, because we know what happens. These diseases progress, and then there's a bad end. And the same happens with mental illness, and we know it. And it just seems so strange to recognize that these are physical illness just like the other ones. We know about the course of these illnesses, and we know with certainty that without treatment they will get worse. And to take that one sort of physical illness and to step back and say, oh well...it's beyond my ability to comprehend. They are curable in the same way that a diabetic condition would be curable. That means you could manage the illness. You don't have to put...have the systems progressing into a worse and worse state.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR ROBAK: You can manage these illnesses. You may have to take medications which are incredibly expensive, by the way, but if you do that, you can work, you can pay taxes, and you can save the family. Children don't have to be put in the custody of the state. There are all kinds of benefits that will accrue because of this bill, and not to people who are already on disability status. We're trying to deal on the front end here with the bill, and that's why it's so important. It's preventative, and it makes all the economic sense in the world to step in and take care of it up front rather than leave people to deteriorate. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the body to advance LB 355 to the E & R.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: The question before the body is the advancement of LB 355 to E & R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Have you all voted who care to? Please record.

CLERK: 32 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on the advancement of