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LB 594A

opportunity to stay on Medicaid, they would have to pay part of the premium, from 2 percent to 10 percent, graduated up to 250 percent of the poverty level. To do this for these hundreds of people who are disabled, the A bill provides that it would cost us, the first year, about \$144,000, and in the second year about \$362,000. I'd just ask you to think about this: if every one of these disabled people said, well, heck with it, you know I won't have the opportunity to work and all of the benefits that go along with being able to take care of myself, then why not just, say, put me in a nursing home? A nursing home, as you all know, for somebody with disabilities and needs some kind of acute and some kind of shelter and helpful care, could be as much as \$3,000 or more a month. So these hundred people, if they went to a nursing home, and only because they didn't have a chance to work, it could cost us \$300,000 a month. That policy seems to make no sense. I think I told you before, for example, I know of a lady in our district that's over 90 years old. She has a daughter that's in her sixties; the mother is in better shape than the daughter. They live together, they take care of each other. But to tell you the truth, because the mother is in not as good a shape as the daughter, it's harder for her to take care of the daughter. The alternative is for her daughter to go to a nursing home for \$3,000 a month, but that would separate these two people that love each other and want to stay together. You know, if we had something like this, where they could make an extra few bucks and maintain that kind of independence, pride and helpful care and dignity that goes with it, it makes a lot of sense. I think we would save an awful lot of money by implementing this kind of policy, and it especially is obvious with people with disabilities. Some people think because of their disabilities they are limited. But I can tell you, after being around, and all of you have been around people with handicaps for years as well, there's an awful lot of ability, some latent, we don't see it, but it's there. That's what the A bill is all about. And it seems to me that it not only makes sense, it saves money, but it's good policy as well. So I'd ask for your support for the A bill.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Lynch. For discussion on the Lynch amendment, AM1270, to LB 594A, Senator Suttle.

SENATOR SUTTLE: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the