

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

January 12, 2000 LB 480

bill is necessary. If we put it in statute, if we, as a Legislature, say that we think this is an important policy that we would like to have carried out by the Department of Health, it means that we'll have a consistent policy and it won't be shoved from pillar to post, and it will get the attention that it needs. But I started to tell you the story. During the early development of this and when the Department of Health was trying to figure out exactly what kinds of initiatives they'd like to develop under this particular legislation, they called about 40 or 50 people together and it was very interesting. I was told that there would be people from the department who would be saying, oh, I didn't know that you were involved with this issue, or, I didn't know you were doing that. I mean, somebody has got to be able to bring people together and they got to be able to talk about those kinds of issues. The left hand really doesn't know what the right hand is doing sometimes. There's 5,600 or 5,800 employees in the Department of Health, is that right, Senator Jensen? It's pretty close to that anyway, and often you need somebody...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...thinking about these issues and doing this kind of thing. So if there's any part of the amendment that I think really guts the bill, it's the first part of the amendment and I would encourage you to vote against that.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Schimek. Senator Tyson.

SENATOR TYSON: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the body. I want to talk about three things in regard to this. The first thing is the change is from "shall" which is a mandate to the director of Health and Human Services, to "may" which is permissive to the director of Health and Human Services. Says he may employ personnel, including a director, necessary to carry out the powers and duties of the initiative. If this bill passes, the director of Health and Human Services has some additional duties assigned him. And what we do here is to charge him to carry out those duties. Now, nowhere is it alleged that it's a good idea to try and "micromanage" how he does his job and what people he assigns to it. What is important is that he does the job that we tell him must be done,