

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

January 21, 2000 LB 482

that this is in addition to medical subsidies that are provided under federal and state programs that we already have in existence. In other words, if you adopt a child who is a state ward that has serious medical problems, the medical expense is already under state and federal law subsidized to pay the medical expense, but there is no additional support to the family who seeks to adopt these children to make additional room in their home and provide all of the other necessities and expenses that we all know are required by children. We have a problem in this state and the problem in this state is that too many of these children are not being adopted and we're having difficulty in finding adoptive parents who are willing to open their homes to these children who are state wards. Most of them are older, eight years and older. I'm not talking about infants. I'm talking about children and you can see their ages from the examples that...that are attached to this handout. The hope is that this additional incentive will bring forth families who will be enabled, because of this additional support, to take these children into their home. The program lasts for five years. Now, you...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: (Gavel.)

SENATOR MATZKE: ...you might ask is it worth the expense involved, and I'll give you an example. I'm not going to name names, but one of the children listed in this handout is currently in a group home...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR MATZKE: ...that is costing the state \$80 a day, almost \$3,000 a month, to keep that child in a group home. Hopefully, if this child is adopted, the state will save in two months the benefits that are payable over five years. So, in the long run, this program is...has a built-in savings factor from an economical standpoint, in addition to finding a degree of permanency for these children in a permanent adoption in a family home. I would be happy to answer any questions, but if there are no questions I would ask for the advancement of this bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Matzke. Senator Jensen,