

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

February 14, 2000 LB 950

one of my constituents, Sara Mitchel (phonetic) and her son, Matthew, came down to visit, who was born with some hearing problems and was not detected until later in life, which could have saved, I think, the state a lot of money, or not necessarily the state, but could have saved a lot of money in this young man's life in insurance. I see LB 950 as being a bill that is a preventative type bill and could, in the long run, save us money, because in general, when we do not know these people have a hearing problem, they don't learn to speak near as soon as those who have good hearing. They will ask for more special education down the line. A good many of them end up with a behavior impairment problems and have to have special education for that, and yet you catch them when they're very young and they have any hearing, you can hang some hearing aides on them, that's an expression that they use themselves by putting hearing aides on them, and they grow a lot faster in the learning process and in my estimation wouldn't need the special services that they get down the line. My own granddaughter, our first grandchild, shortly after she was born, had spinal meningitis and she lost her hearing completely in one ear and partially in the other ear. So having this disease, they automatically tested her. And they tested her at least twice a year and she still gets tested at least once a year. But by her getting tested, we learned from the very beginning how to speak to her, to go to her good ear, which she had...she still has some good hearing in, she does not have 100 percent in that ear. But I don't believe that she would have progressed as well as she did if we didn't know that she didn't have any hearing on that one side four years later. It makes a difference when you send a kid to school, if we already know they have a hearing problem, where they sit the kid and make sure the kid hears what's going on because of their grades, and need to have good grades, and they can't if they don't hear what's going on and learn what's going on. I see this LB 950 as being a preventative measure that we need to take a look at and I think would save us some money in the long run. Thank you.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Matzke.

SENATOR MATZKE: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I want to commend Senator Byars for bringing this bill to us. And I think the bill has, by the committee amendments, is made more