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The implementation of the program fits nicely into existing infrastructure of the Health and Human Services System Division of Aging Services, with eight area Offices on Aging which currently cover the state. With this existing infrastructure, most, if not all, of the money will go directly to fund new programs, not inventing a program or creating new infrastructure. Simply put, this is a program that will save taxpayers money. Americans are living longer than ever before. As our population ages, a growing number of older Americans will need long-term care. Most seniors and their families prefer home care rather than nursing home or hospital care. That is why the Senior Companion Program Act is so valuable. This program will provide the assistance that frail seniors need in order to live independently in their own homes. As our elderly population grows, so will our need for Senior Companion Program. This is a problem that we need to address now. Thank you.

**PRESIDENT MAURSTAD:** Thank you, Senator Dickey. Senator Jensen, you're recognized to open on the committee amendments. (AM2473, Legislative Journal page 839.)

**SENATOR JENSEN:** Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. The committee amendment is small. It does three things. It removes the appropriation language from the bill, and a separate A bill will be introduced to follow the bill. It requires the provision of liability insurance for senior volunteers to mirror those same provisions that are in the federal Senior Companion Program. And it requires the Department of Health and Human Services to set the amount of stipends that the senior volunteers will receive. This amendment is on your computer and those are the only three things that it does do. With that, thank you, Mr. President. Be glad to answer any questions.

**PRESIDENT MAURSTAD:** Thank you, Senator Jensen. For discussion on the committee amendment, Senator Dickey, your light is on first. Senator Dickey waives. Senator Lynch, you're recognized. Senator Lynch waives. Senator Chambers.

**SENATOR CHAMBERS:** Not on the amendment.

**PRESIDENT MAURSTAD:** Senator Don Pederson. Senator Jensen, you're recognized to close on the committee amendments. Senator