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Transcriber's Office

March 7, 2000

LB 1101

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Janssen. Senator Jensen, on the advancement of LB 1101.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President. I did want to mention a couple things in committee. First of all, this right now is being done in Omaha and in Lincoln, and this program would expand it across the state, particularly into the smaller and the rural communities. And the testimony that was brought forward really suggested to me that it does almost as much good for the volunteers as it does to the individual receiving that care and that assistance, and we did have some of those volunteers that did come forward and the stories that they told, particularly an individual, a woman, who was kind of in depression herself, and really felt she didn't have a great deal of meaning in her life. And a friend told her about this program and maybe she could start to contribute, and she did and has just found it extremely rewarding. She now has five people that she sees on a regular basis and they've become friends and she brings so much joy to those individuals, I'm sure. So it's kind of a win-win situation. First of all, the individual receiving the care, receiving the volunteer to come into their home to chat with them, to visit with them, and then also for the volunteer who really then has a purpose in life, a reason for living, a reason that they can contribute in this world. And so, to me, it just looked like a great match. The dollars, \$200,000, I don't know how you could stretch dollars any further than this particular program. And so I just commend Senator Aguilar and Senator Dickey for bringing this program to us to extend it across the state and would just urge the body to feel in their hearts that this is a good program that we should have. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Jensen. Further debate, Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I often have to be the one to open discussion on bills like this which seem so alluring on their surface, which have such a worthwhile goal, but I think the bill as drafted is a sham and I'm going to tell you why. But let me ask Senator Aguilar a question or two first.