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force be in place to comment and advise on whatever issues occur during the next stages of the progress and examine and comment on major decisions already made. In conclusion, I believe that this task force would serve as an important resource during the development and implementation of the EBT program in this state. I feel that this is the type of team that the original EBT task force envisioned and requested. I believe that this task force would increase the quality and uniformity of contracts with the...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR JANSSEN: ...parties involved by having the structure in place. Also it would make the implementation process easier if there is an entity in place to contact for assessments of how things are going and to insure that all the interested parties have representation in the process. I am looking forward to your support of this very important bill, it's something that we have to do. We have to be on-line with the other states that have already committed to this. And that will be all that I have on my opening, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Jensen, Chair of the Health Committee, you're recognized to open on the committee amendments.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of the Legislature, the committee amendment replaces the bill but does not make substantial changes to the bill, I want to thank Senator Janssen and his staff for their assistance in preparing this amendment. As Senator Janssen said, the bill is required because of the federal mandate to develop an EBT system for the provision of food stamps. At the public hearing on the bill the committee heard testimony from two testifiers, in addition to Senator Janssen, in support, and then neutral testimony from the Health and Human Services Committee or department. The committee heard no testimony in opposition to the bill. The committee amendment essentially does the following things: Overall the amendment reduces the number of members of the EBT System Task Force, from 15 to 14; it adds the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services on the task force in place of the Director of Health and Human Services Finance and