

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

March 15, 2000 LB 1407

child care, and to answer Senator Raikes' problem, we don't have firm figures of what those are. The only thing we can understand, of course, is what the cost has been and it looks like it's going up. But I do want to explain a little bit. When we entered into the CHIP program, I believe that was LB 1063 a few years ago, the Children's Health Insurance Program, got to remember there's two CHIPs here but this is the Children's Health Insurance Program which was part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, which covered every child from womb until 18 years old who is 185 percent below the poverty level with full Medicaid insurance. And there was an enrollment process that Nebraska went out and tried to enroll as many of those individuals into that program that was possible and we did a great job in doing that and, matter of fact, like I said, we led the nation and was kind of a model to other states on that enrollment process. But then also through that process we identified a number of people who were Medicaid eligible who, before that, probably didn't know that they were. And so with that process and then...and then through what has happened with the administration decision in January of 1998, that we would cover all children in child care 185 percent below poverty line, we ended up with a large amount, 35 percent increase. We estimate that there could be another 15 percent increase over that, so that got us where we are. Senator Raikes, I also believe that the bill is lacking and that you are absolutely right in that somebody who...under the way...the way LB 1407 was drafted and even in our amendment, those who are at 90 percent of the poverty level, they also would fall off that cliff at the end of 24 months. We need to correct that. Senator Beutler has an amendment, I have an amendment. I think his is 150 percent. Mine is I think at 120 percent. But somewhere this morning I hope we can address that so that those who were receiving it before and underneath the ADC program do not fall off the cliff. Those that are transitioning from the Welfare-to-Work program, that 24-month period, and we recognize that those people going off of welfare, finding a job, will probably find a job at entry level, then they've got 24 months to hopefully achieve some raises, hopefully increase their salary, and then those individuals would be able to pick up their own child care cost, and then I think a study is going to allow us to do that. I think there should be some exemptions and I think we also allow that in that we say "may"...or...