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LB 925

don't think that this is a competition. This is not a competition between existing child care providers and businesses. We don't have enough child care providers in the state as it is, and they are going to have to work together to make this work. I think that also Senator Landis' costs and being the bricks on his back, there are lots of bricks that we're carrying in this budget. What we have to do is decide which bricks are...are the easiest to carry and what is our priority. Are our children in this state a priority or are TV stations a priority in this state? I think we have to look at what we want to fund, what we don't want to fund, and decide whether we want to fund mental health care, children care, or whatever care we have to do for those people who can't care for themselves. That's the important issue here is taking care of people who can't take care of themselves. I would appreciate it if you would support my...my amendment and, ultimately, Senator Landis' bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Suttle. Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature. I stand in support of Senator Suttle's bill (sic--amendment). In fact, I could not support LB 925 unless we provide some incentive, I believe, to those day care centers that are licensed and are working towards accreditation, rather than just the businesses. I believe that high quality care is important in this state, and day care centers, as Senator Suttle said, are very, very difficult, good quality day care centers are very difficult to find, not only in urban areas but also in the rural areas, I think most of us would agree. I would agree with Senator Wickersham that low wages, yes, are a concern in this state, not only for those working but also for day care providers. I was reading in the book that you handed out that day care providers, there are only ten other occupations that pay less, and many of those are those that are tipped occupations, those that receive average hourly wages such as waiters, motion picture projectionist, dining room helpers. So I think that we need to give some support to these day care providers that Senator Suttle's amendment does provide. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Stuhr. Senator Kremer.