

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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LB 819

it incorporates the new act by reference of many other sections. The substantive part of the bill actually are in the first 28 pages, and I've given you an outline that will describe...I hope the outline is going around anyway, that will describe the amendment and I hope that will be helpful to you. The committee amendment revises and harmonizes the definitions of health care facilities and health care services currently found in Section 71-2017.01. It adds adult day care services, respite care services and pharmacies as health care facilities, or health care services that will require licensure under the new act, as of January, 2002. That is essential because providers have asked to be licensed for purposes of reimbursement for services and quality assurance and because of the growing number of respite care services that are being provided in the state at locations other than facilities that are already licensed. It changes the licensing fee provisions to require an annual base fee of \$50 for all health care facilities and health care services; and up to a variable of \$1,000 for assisted living facilities, hospitals, nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities for the mentally retarded, and skilled nursing facilities; and up to \$500 for all other health care facilities and health care services; and objective criteria for setting the actual fee that is established. The purpose of changing the fee structure is to lessen dependence on the General Fund. I might mention to you that by passage of this bill, we will lessen the General Fund by \$440,000 per year; in other words, the state right now has been subsidizing through the General Fund for these licensing fees. That will be eliminated. It allows the Department to issue a provisional license to facilities when patient safety won't be compromised. It specifically provides for a temporary suspension or elimination of a license in an emergency or life-threatening situation, and outright repeal sections of current law that duplicate or conflict with provisions of the new act. Essentially, LB 819 is a cleanup bill for health care facility licensure, with additional substantive changes that I hope I've explained in my introduction and in the outline provided to you. I believe the committee amendment has widespread support. We have not heard from any of the stakeholders or providers of any problems. I have...I will offer a minor technical amendment to the bill as well, and I'm prepared to introduce that amendment right now if I may, Mr. President.