

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

April 5, 2000

LB 1101

approximately \$35,000 to \$38,000 per year, an amount often paid for by taxpayer funded reimbursement programs such as Medicaid and Medicare. The delivery of unnecessary care drives up costs and, ultimately, taxes. The annual cost of service for one senior companion volunteer serving 20 hours a week and working with 5 senior clients is \$3,850. If these...if this program keeps those five people out of the nursing facility we have just saved over \$186,000. Almost the whole appropriation for this program will be paid back if we could just keep these five people in their own homes. With the passage of the Senior Companion Program we have the potential to serve 250 to 260 seniors with this program here in the state of Nebraska. Obviously, not all these seniors will require assisted living or skilled nursing type supervision, however, a great deal may. If this program keeps just ten seniors out of an assisted-living facility or skilled-nursing facility that cost \$38,000 a year, we have just saved the state of Nebraska over \$372,000. We've almost doubled the \$200,000 appropriation. If this program keeps a hundred seniors living in their own home and out of a facility that costs \$38,000 a year, we have saved over \$3.7 million. If we double that to 200 people we save over \$7.4 million a year. Again, this program has the potential to serve 250 to 260 Nebraska seniors. It is predicted by the year 2020 that the senior population in this country will double, by the year 2050 it will have quadrupled. We are facing big problems in the future of long-term healthcare in the state and in this country. We have some big decisions to make in this area in the never near future. This program does not solve all the long-term health-care problems. It does, however, offer another cost-effective solution to this ongoing problem. I urge you to adopt the Chambers amendment and to advance LB 105 (sic--1101) to Select File. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Dickey. Senator Hilgert, on the Chambers amendment.

SENATOR HILGERT: Thank you, Mr. President, members. Senator Dickey's comments I have to follow up on. I think his point is well made. I think it's a valid one. It's an excellent point and, as we should keep seniors, who can, in their homes to save the state money, I think we also should keep those infants in their homes with their mothers as well. Thank you.