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have on volunteer emergency services providers and medication aides. The department has indicated to the committee that it intends to subsidize the cost of credentialing systems for professionals and occupations in those specific circumstances. And the bill provides the flexibility for the department to take those circumstances into account. The bill lists the various credentials for which the department will establish and collect fees. It provides for other fees for credentialing-related services, such as issuing duplicate licenses, verifying credentials, and putting a credential on a lapse status. The bill also provides for late fees and administrative penalties for practicing a profession or occupation before a credential is issued, before an expired credential is renewed, or before a lapsed credential is reinstated. The bill also creates a single fund, before we had many, many funds, called the Professional and Occupational Credentialing Cash Fund, to receive all fees, gifts, grants, and other monies, excluding fines and civil penalties that are collected by the department. The department is required to use the fund for credentialing activities, except for a percentage of fees that is credited to the Nebraska Regulation and (sic) Health Professional (sic) Fund, 407 process, that I think most of you are familiar with. Monies in all other credentialing-related funds authorized prior to the effective date of the bill are transferred into the new fund. The bill has an operative date of January 1, 2004. LB 242 is a comprehensive and a more equitable approach of establishing fees for healthcare professionals and occupations, and it reflects recommendations received through a very intensive and public process conducted by the department. The bill has no fiscal impact and was advanced unanimously by the committee. I would ask for advancement of LB 242. Thank you, Mr. President. I'd be glad to answer any questions.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Jensen. You've heard the opening on LB 242. Open for discussion on advancement of that bill. Senator Byars, followed by Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Senator Cunningham (sic) and colleagues. I think this is one of the best work products, quite honestly, to come out of Health and Human Services in years. I am extremely impressed with the work that Dick Nelson,