

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

April 1, 2003

LB 724

whether it's the mental health unit at the health care center, but related to Medicaid, relating to law enforcement, and most importantly, how it relates to the patient and the patient's family. And on a personal note, what really got my attention with this was, before I came to the Legislature, when a resident of western Nebraska...was in Hastings in this particular scenario...had been on the phone with his children, and had a great conversation, but that family support wasn't there. And I'm not placing the blame on anyone. But the fact that he was so far from his family, I believe that is what led to a suicide, hours later, after that phone conversation. And it really got my attention of how important it is to have that family and community support for these patients. And we know that these patients are all across Nebraska. This is not unique to an urban community or unique to a rural community. It's all across Nebraska. And this out-of-the-box thinking, I would suggest, is a good way to address the problem, and also, with good common sense, addressing the cost issues as well. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Hartnett.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Mr. President, members of the body, I...as I listen to the comments related to this, I think the step we're going is the right way. Senator Jensen, you know, as...have dealt in Sarpy County, there is always...and I think they went to Norfolk. you know, I think there is always a dissatisfaction with not being able to...(laugh) they would be knocking on the door and they wouldn't be able to get in and so forth. How do you envision...this is not...this bill and so forth...how do you envision, in my county...you know, Tip O'Neill said that, you know, politics is all local. (Laugh) And I guess that's my concern. How do you see our county, you know, working with...you know, with...I guess we could go south, you know, to Cass County, or we could go, you know, north, to Douglas County. So how do you see our area working in for this mental health? Because I see that as one area that we need to take care of in the state. And I applaud you, I guess, with starting the process. And so I guess I would ask you, how do you see my county, or...as part of this whole process with the...you know, like, this bill is mostly intent, but where do you see it going,