

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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FLOOR DEBATE

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SENATOR WEHRBEIN:    Okay.

SENATOR JENSEN:     ...that we can do this. I think that we have some providers out there that would be willing to step up and start doing that. There's one other thing is part of this. We in this state have not done anything long-range. And we in many cases have encouraged providers to build infrastructure, to hire staff, and then two years later said, well, we're not going to do that anymore. We must partner with providers on the long range. And I think that's very, very important. And that's certainly the direction that I want to go, so we don't leave providers hanging out there, because they are the ones that we're looking forward to providing this. The time frame just depends on how quickly we can bring up the community-based services before we ever do anything to eliminate any beds. We need to expand some beds, not reduce them.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN:    Right. I assume...this is, I think, something I've heard about since I've come in, about doing this. But we haven't gotten there. And so you're putting a little burr under the saddle, if you will?

SENATOR JENSEN:     That is right. And also, right now, there are some...

SENATOR CUDABACK:    One minute.

SENATOR JENSEN:     ...federal funds that are available to convert from the institutions of the past to the community-based services. I hope we can also get some of those.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN:    Good. I've heard about...thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK:    Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. Senator Raikes, followed by Senators Erdman and Vrtiska. Senator Raikes.

SENATOR RAIKES:     Thank you, Mr. President, members. I'd like to continue some questions with Senator Jensen, if I could.

SENATOR CUDABACK:    Senator Jensen.