

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

April 14, 2003 LB 454

experience too that anytime we start a program that is funded by the federal government, the next time, after a year or two, we find out that money went away, and it becomes an obligation of the state. So I'm concerned about what the financial obligation is of this program. Can you inform me on that?

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Aguilar, would you respond?

SENATOR AGUILAR: We have had a discussion, you know, in regard to the funding and what...I will tell you that this funding has been around for seven years. And the reason it's been around that long is because this program works. The federal government believes in it wholeheartedly, and supports it wholeheartedly. Right now our program has in-house I think a \$300,000 grant. And you know, most of the cost comes for the set-up of the program. Once you get it set up, it's not that expensive to maintain. We also have local funding. We also have funding from the participants if they can't afford it.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: Well, candidly, I think we've seen a lot of programs that the federal government is really enthused about, but when their finances become slim, then they say, okay, this is your responsibility. We certainly had that with the Patrol. We've had that with many facets of our government. I think we should just be aware of the fact that when you take on a program and you talk about \$300,000 worth of federal funds...I'm sure that a lot of that is start-up money...but on the other hand, I think we should just be aware of the fact that we're building in additional programs that we ultimately are going to end up having to pay for. Thank you.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Can I have the rest of your time, Senator?

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: Yes. I would give you the balance of my time.

SENATOR CUDABACK: You may have it, Senator Aguilar.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Thank you, Senator. I'd like to point out that we're very much aware of the statement you just made, very much. But it's also necessary and important to note that this