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LB 73, 125

committee amendments with AM1706. (Legislative Journal page 1621.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Tyson, you're recognized to open on your amendment to the committee amendment.

SENATOR TYSON: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. My amendment was heard as a bill in Banking, Insurance and Commerce Committee as LB 125. While it was there, one party spoke against it, and that as BlueCross BlueShield. They have since removed their opposition. This bill sets up a single form card, because now insurance companies that have prescription plans each issue a card. They are many in form and, because they take a lot of time, a group called the National Council for Prescription Drug Programs Pharmacy ID Card Implementation Guide, I like that, came together and designed a card that would be issued in similar form by all insurance companies. Now the need for this is that at the present time there are some real problems in the pharmaceutical business, is that there are literally thousands of different benefit cards. They create difficulties for the patients and the pharmacists to the point where it's estimated by one group that 68 percent of the pharmacists' time is spent dealing with issues unrelated to patient care. National organizations have estimated that 20 percent of the...pardon me. Pharmacists spend 20 percent of their time acting as intermediaries between the patient and their insurance companies. This single form card eliminates a good portion of that and leads to increased efficiencies. As pharmacists now are grappling with both a shortage of pharmacists, a growing number of prescriptions and an ever-increasing workload, it becomes absolutely necessary that we do something to increase the efficiency in dealing out pharmaceutical prescriptions. This is what that does. This is a committee priority bill and the fiscal shows some cost to DAS and University of Nebraska, and I would offer that that is incorrect because at the rate that drug plans and health insurance generally is expanding, I think this year it's 18 percent, that's an absorbable cost. We're not talking about a large sum of money here. In short, I would offer that this is something that we should be doing, and I ask for your support. Thank you, Mr. President.