

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

February 9, 2004 LB 841

mentally ill?

SENATOR BYARS: There are standards set in statute, in federal statute, that defines mental illness or mental retardation or both. The Department of Health and Human Services would make that definition when you apply for services.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: Well, do you feel that there would ever be the instance where there would probably be more of them being diagnosed for mental retardation if we would pass this bill and they could get to a facility like that?

SENATOR BYARS: No.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: There, you don't think that would ever happen.

SENATOR BYARS: No.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Byars, Senator Byars. I'm sorry. One other thing that also concerns me, and I'm going to talk a little bit about, Chambers' amendment. Chambers' amendment, on the religious portion of it, I've been doing some very serious thinking about it and, matter of fact, I thought about it this morning. I also visited with our county assessor on this, trying to get...get some information as far as individuals that are exempt in property owned by religious groups, housing, people that have...that have taken the profession of being a teacher in a parochial school and services are provided for them. I have, you know, some concern. You know, are we going a little bit too far? These individuals are raising, you know, a good salary, just like someone else that is teaching at a school. They're being able to raise a family, send it to school, drive on the roads, and get all of the services that the individuals that are teaching at the same school and also, you know, paying taxes, you know, for the county, for the school systems. I think we need to take a real serious look at, you know, what we're doing here and maybe we need to open it up and get some discussion on this at a later time. So with that, those are my comments, and I'll return the balance of my time back to the Chair.