

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

March 2, 2004

LB 998

SENATOR CHAMBERS: So we come back to the cap. And the cap was put in place, obviously, not to benefit the victims of malpractice, because they would be benefitted if there were no cap. Would you agree with that?

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: I think it could be argued that way, yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: But with the cap, we were looking at benefit to the physician, in terms of a lesser premium that he or she would have to pay.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: Well, as I indicated early on, this bill does not deal with the caps per se.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Right.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: This bill just simply deals with the viability of the fund. I think there are many other considerations that need to be taken into account if we were discussing the caps themselves, and whether or not that is an important thing for the community. And I think that many of the arguments that you can hear relate to whether or not you have adequate medical coverage available, or medical attention available, if you did not have the funds, if the physicians would still be there, if they would be able to practice in certain areas, and things of that nature. I'm talking about--when I say various areas, I mean areas of practice.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Right now.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Pederson, do the premium amounts vary from state to state, even when we're talking about the same area of practice of physicians?

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: Greatly.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Say it again?

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: They vary greatly.