

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

March 10, 2004 LB 1005

children, it is our responsibility to see to that these young citizens of this state are taken care of in a proper manner, and they are in a safe environment. So with that, thank you, Mr. Speaker and members.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Jensen. Further discussion on AM3011? Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Jensen, if I may, I wanted to ask about one section of the bill, and what caught my attention was the fiscal note, that part of it which says that qualification for designation of a critical access hospital would be changed from a maximum of 15 beds to a maximum of 25 beds. Is that what we're doing now with this amendment, Senator Jensen?

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Jensen, would you yield?

SENATOR JENSEN: Yes. We have in this state, I think, seven hospitals that qualify or that can qualify as critical access care facilities if we adjust this. And I think Senator Byars could even answer that question better. This was his bill, or not his bill, but he has expertise in this particular area. But that was the reason we took it out, because there was a fiscal impact, and then after Senator Byars had visited with Department of Health and Human Services, they found that this can still be done and there will not be a fiscal impact to the state. And if you wouldn't mind, could...

SENATOR BEUTLER: I would. Senator Cudaback, I would cut off Senator Jensen and redirect my request to Senator Byars.

SENATOR CUDABACK: You may do so. Senator Byars, would you yield?

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Mr. President. Yes, Senator Beutler, the legislation was introduced originally and was included in the bill, and I had a separate bill that dealt with it also, in response to the federal government's Medicare legislation that was passed before the first of the year. Senator Nelson was instrumental at that time in changing the critical access designation from 15 to 25 beds to accommodate the rural