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SENATOR ENGEL: Thank you, Mr. President. It's my pleasure to introduce LB 205. This bill deletes the statutes language concerning developmentally (sic) disability regions. Let me give you a little bit of the history. In 1991, the Legislature passed LB 830, which later became the Developmental Disabilities Act. At that time, what was the Department of Health and Human Services had two major concerns which were reflected in Section 83-1212 of our statutes. The first paragraph of Section 83-1212 states that if a region fails to meet statutory requirements for certification and accreditation, all equipment and property shall be returned to the state Department of Health and Human Services. This language was necessary when the six regions were the primary providers of day and residential services to persons with disabilities. However, since that time, many more providers have been established and the state would not have to take over services if a regional provider were to cease. The regions are now interlocal agreements that contract with the state to provide these services, and while the state provides nearly 90 percent of their operating funds, HHSS rules and regs do say the construction of buildings, or alterations or renovations of such buildings, are not...are unallowable costs as far as funds administered by HHSS. Therefore, the regions feel that the present state law would allow their buildings to also be transferred to the state even though no state money was used to purchase or renovate the real estate. Furthermore, the regions feel that as long as they are carrying out their contractual obligations, equipment and supplies, with the exception of patient records, should not revert to the state Department of HHS. The statute only mentions the six regional providers, yet the state also contracts with many private providers, and since no region has ever been disbanded due to noncompliance with Section 83-1212, LB 205 deletes the language. The second paragraph of 83-1212 states that the regions shall provide suitable office space, furniture, office equipment, and access to files and records to the department. That section of law was written at the time that DD service coordination was provided by and officed with the region. Service coordination is now provided by an office with HHS, making this section unnecessary. My office has had discussion with the Department of Health and Human Services