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March 2, 2005 LB 264, 265, 266

I do have a couple questions relative to the committee amendment, if Senator Jensen would yield.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Jensen, would you yield to a question from Senator Synowiecki?

SENATOR JENSEN: Yes.

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Thank you, Senator Jensen. LB 264 essentially is a product of a combination of LB 264, LB 265, and LB 266. Is that...

SENATOR JENSEN: That is correct.

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: ...correct, Senator? Obviously, we do not have access to a committee statement for LB 265 and LB 266. I want to be assured that there was no opposition testimony on the other two bills that have been enveloped into LB 264.

SENATOR JENSEN: We did IPP those. There should be a committee statement on file. I can't recall that we had any opposition, though, on either of those bills whatsoever. I might mention that before we started this hearing that day, and it's something that we're doing a little more in Health and Human Services, we had the department come over and give a presentation, a briefing, on child welfare. That was quite extensive and I do have that with me if anybody wanted to see that. But they first came in and outlined what they have done, particularly since we had the task force, which was very good. And I don't mean to take any of your time, Senator Synowiecki, but the department, after that presentation, also Nancy Montanez, has already started doing a caseload study, so this is not just feel-good legislation. They are involved and they want to be part of this. But the briefing that they had on child welfare as to what we have done, what's still before us, I thought was fairly extensive and much appreciated.

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: I appreciate that, Senator Jensen, and you kind of segued right into my next question. Although a lot of members have been speaking of this as entirely discretionary, there are, in fact, particularly as it relates to Section 3 and