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

April 4, 2005 LB 709

Furthering in that packet, you find some charts and graphs that deal with the current breakdown of spending in Medicaid. You look at the eligibility numbers as far as who is currently eligible, the amount of money that is currently spent in those areas. And you continue on through this packet of information. There's also the history of where we have come with Medicaid and where we're currently spending money and what decisions were made prior to this date, so, prior to December 4. You'll notice that there are different decisions that this Legislature has made recently to expand Medicaid. We have expanded Medicaid to allow for different individuals to receive insurance. have been different decisions made on the federal level. And those are all outlined for you in that page. You'll also notice in that that there was a decision made by this Legislature in And LB 8 was done during a special session to address a financial shortfall. And the simple answer, it appeared to the Legislature at the time, was we had to reform our system. But we did not have a thoughtful or comprehensive approach to doing that. We found an area, we attempted to achieve savings in that area, and we made a decision. That decision later resulted in a lawsuit, one in which the state lost. And we have had to deal with those decisions since then. And again, it was because of lack of effort or lack of planning that was able to be implemented. So you continue through here. The second-to-last page deals with the demographics of the state of Nebraska. And I bring this up because part of the committee amendment deals with the bill that Senator Cunningham has brought to us dealing with long-term care. No matter what we do within the Medicaid system, no matter what we do as far as public policy, we must address the issue of long-term care within the state of Nebraska and how it's financed. Absolutely must be part of this. And so I'm grateful that Senator Cunningham has introduced a proposal that we have included in our committee amendment. And it ties in pretty well with the demographics that are offered to you on the second-to-last page of the packet from the Department of Health and Human Services. In addition to that, I think it's important to look at the last page of that packet. It shows the level of insurance coverage currently provided to Nebraskans by their employer. Nebraska is well below the national average as far as employers providing health insurance to their employees. Now, why is that part of the discussion? We've had this