

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

April 4, 2005            LB 709

Second Session, to establish a program. The amendment does have an emergency clause. I would ask for the adoption of the amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Jensen. You've heard the opening on the Health and Human Services Committee amendments to LB 709. Mr. Clerk, motion on the desk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Beutler would move to amend the committee amendments with AM1027. (Legislative Journal page 1056.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Beutler, to open on AM1027 to the committee amendments to LB 709.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, I think this is a bill where we should have a good discussion. I don't think anybody is in filibuster mode or anything. But make no mistake about it, this is a huge item. And I agree with Senator Erdman and Senator Jensen that absolutely a study needs to be done, and it needs to be well done. My concern is that the study will focus on, how do we cut these various programs, without focusing upon also the good that these programs do, and the factors that are causing people to load on to the Medicaid system. In other words, addressing the symptom without addressing the various causes of what we're observing and what's happening at the moment. So I want to talk about that some today, and offer you a couple of ideas. The first amendment that's being offered to you is really nothing that changes the substance of what the senators and the committee are offering. It goes to the findings of the Legislature, and adds an element that I hope is substantial in a tonal change, as opposed to substantively requiring change. But findings, as you know, are simply reflections of the Legislature that give an indication of why they've asked for a certain thing to be done. It doesn't...nothing in a finding requires any agency or anybody to actually do anything. The findings in the standing committee amendment are these: The Medicare assistance program has resulted in significantly increased expenditures by the state of Nebraska. Very true. In response to such increased expenditures, the Legislature has taken various actions