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

April 5, 2005 LB 709

Now this year it's 17.2 percent. It is growing dramatically and I think it's something that we need to be concerned about. I know that some states have done some pretty I was just in Missouri and I know that they dramatic things. passed the Governor's proposal which had to do with making some drastic changes in their Medicaid program. I think that it did not show, to me, from what I read, that they had actually had a study of what to do. It just seemed like it was a reaction to a problem and I think it could have some draconian results on their population. But be that as it may, everybody is concerned about this, and the only way that you can approach a concern is to study it and find out, (A) what's going on; (B) what, if anything, can you do to correct the situation. I Senator Erdman for bringing this matter to us and I think that it appears that there is a broadening of a group of people that are going to study this, which will mean that we will have a broader approach. And whenever you start to study things, people are afraid that it's going to affect them adversely, and it doesn't have to happen that way, but you do have to study the issue. And the only reason that I wanted to make this mention of the percentage was because the percentage that...of the growth of Medicaid currently, because I heard a much lower figure from that yesterday. And I think that the reason that we had a short bit of improvement in Medicaid happened to be the year ago our United States Senator, Ben Nelson,...

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: One minute.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: ...was able to transfer monies into the Medicaid program, approximately \$100 million of federal funds, and that helped our situation greatly for a short period of time. So I do believe that this is a matter that we can't continue to ignore. We need to study it and I think as broad as the committee can be, it should be used to study this program and hopefully come back with something that we can work with. I have a lot of confidence in our Health and Human Services Committee, particularly Senator Jensen and Senator Erdman, and I think that they legitimately want to study this issue and come out with something that will be beneficial to the state. Thank you.