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PRESIDENT SHEEHY PRESIDING

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Senator Byars, you have about 3 minutes, 30 seconds.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. Senator Chambers, I would yield the balance of my time to you, if you would like to comment.

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, how long is his opening?
(Laughter) How much time is left?

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Three, fifteen.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: After...okay. It seemed like this has been going on an awfully long time, but anyway, I will take the time. I'm going to support Senator Byars' amendment. My reasoning is simply stated. Direction and guidance are being offered to the committee. Senator Byars wants to tell the committee that if you study all aspects of this problem and any other things you think ought to be looked at, do not consider it a viable alternative to suggest that the costs be shifted to the counties or the providers. If this language is put into the statute, it will not impose a penalty if somebody on that committee which is doing this studying would make the suggestion that counties ought to come in and help bear some of the cost. Counties are delegated certain powers, duties and responsibilities by the state. They do not originate simply by virtue of their existence any powers or authorities or prerogatives. What they do is delegated to them by the state, and what is delegated must be public or state business. So perhaps, in conducting a comprehensive study of Medicaid and the increased costs, looking at what the counties may offer could perhaps be a legitimate topic for discussion. I have my light on so I will stop at this point because I might get right in the middle of what I really want to say and my time would run out. Thank you, Mr. President.