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LB 709

the cost of providing medical service to county government or to the providers of care? Is that to be a policy that is enacted pursuant to the direction of the Legislature? We all know that nothing is law unless the Legislature enacts a bill which declares it to be law. So even if a policy was suggested by this committee that there should be this shift, the Legislature need not accept that, if we get around to enacting legislation. But, by the same token, we could have left the green copy of LB 709 exactly as it was, untouched, without any of these additional people advocating for different points of view and interests added. We could have left all of them out. And whatever was brought back to us pursuant to what was produced under the language in the green copy, we could have rejected it, all of it. What we've been trying to do with this discussion and amendments is to provide direction and to give an idea of what the Legislature is likely to approve of, what the Legislature is less likely to approve of. If we were to take a poll right today, I don't know how many senators would say that there should absolutely be no responsibility on the counties or the providers to absorb any of the additional cost of Medicaid, but that's not what we're required to do here today and that's not what Senator Byars is asking us to do. This is an additional bit of direction and guidance. There are so many items and factors bearing on the increased cost of Medicaid,...

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...which have not been reduced to amendments to have those factors included in the study, that I think it behooves Senator Byars and anybody else who has a concern to put it in the form of an amendment and offer it and try to get it attached to this bill. If a study comes back, if findings are made, if recommendations are offered, all of that will probably have a bearing on what the Legislature will present next year, if anything, and something will probably be presented next year. I'm going to support Senator Beutler's...Senator Byars' amendment. Excuse me, Senator Byars and Senator Beutler. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Erdman.