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LB 709

SENATOR ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. If Senator Byars would yield, I'd have a question for him.

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Senator Byars, would you yield?

SENATOR BYARS: Yes, I will.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Senator Byars, I guess clarification of our conversation, when we're talking about "without shifting the cost of providing medical services to county government or to the providers of care," there could be an argument made that a copay situation, where we would either be allowed to offer a copay under a certain service, or the federal government would allow us to do that under our plan, that could be deemed or maybe even viewed by some in the provider community as a shift of the cost of actually administering that program. Is that your...I mean, is that how specific we're going with your intent here, or could you give me an answer to that?

SENATOR BYARS: No, I'm not going that specific. I want intent language that it is the intent of this committee to come with a plan that does not make major shifts to the provider community and to other forms of government. When it comes typically to copays, copays go to the individuals that are receiving services. This does not talk about those individuals, although they would be affected if there were cost shifts to the providers. There will be ultimate, tremendous impacts in costs in private insurance if we add costs to the providers. There would be increases in property taxes if we shifted to county government and this...I want to make it very clear that public policy, that the intent and public policy of this body is not to do that.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Senator Byars, your answer is complete, but it didn't answer the question. Administration of that copay would be the costs that would be viewed by the provider as a shift to them. If they aren't accepting copays for any of the services they're providing now, they would have to have a way to administer that part of their service. And so, while it would be a cost to the individual recipient or consumer, the cost as far as administering the amount that was paid and how that was