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April 20, 2005 LB 709

SENATOR CUDABACK: The amendment has been adopted. Mr. Clerk,
next motion.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Synowiecki would move
to amend with AM1209. (Legislative Journal page 1227.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Synowiecki, to open on AM1209.

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Thank you, Senator Cudaback, members, good morning. Senator, if you recall on General File for LB 709, Senator Chambers and I had two quite similar amendments which focused on Medicaid beneficiaries and their accessing of healthcare, and that to have a full and complete study that there was an attempt to include the private sector insurance...private sector employment, so that we don't do this in a vacuum and focus solely on those that are...that we don't focus solely on those that are participating in the program, but that we include within the study and any legislation that may come about, the private sector role relative to private insurance. This amendment is a result of working with the Department of Health and Human Services and it significantly simplifies what we attempted to do on General File. This amendment, AM1209, takes the providers entirely out of this loop. If you'll recall, during General File there was some concern relative to the...how this approach would perhaps tax the providers, and unnecessarily so, and how it kind of convoluted that situation. AM1209 simply provides that the department report those that have enrolled in the Medicaid program and are eligible for Medicaid benefits--the employee and/or employee's spouse. The amendment includes and continues to include the 25-employee threshold, so that we are focusing primarily on some of the state's larger employers. The department reports that they can now issue a report such as this. I think it's important that we include this provision as part of this LB 709. Perhaps this data will be available when the Legislature convenes next year, so that the Legislature can consider the information and the data that will be obtained, and so that this data can be included as we continue to search for remedies for the Medicaid expenditures in our state, and that we don't do it in a vacuum, as Senator Byars has repeatedly warned us not to, and that we include the private sector employer and