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LB 425

Byars. You've heard the opening on the Byars amendment, AM1555, to LB 425. Open for discussion. Senator Redfield, followed by Senator Synowiecki and others.

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. Members of the body, I went over earlier and I apologized to Senator Byars for not supporting his amendment earlier. You see, I felt that it was important that we hold the line on the budget, and I was following the lead of the Appropriations Committee, and I had had some discussions with Senator Pederson about the cost of this and the fairness issue. But I will tell you that I didn't see nickels and dimes when we allocated \$15 million from the Cash Reserve Fund, so I have assured Senator Byars that I am going to support this amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Redfield. Senator Synowiecki, and others.

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. And again, to kind of reiterate what Senator Pederson was going and to reiterate what I had discussed on General File was our appropriations methodology to this in terms of there was a clear division, as Senator Pederson indicated, between a group of providers that have not received any increase whatsoever since 2001, and another group of providers that have been receiving increases yearly throughout our difficult years with the budget. And what the Appropriations Committee did was...had a pretty clear division line between those two groups of providers and the developmental disability provider group fell within that division, if you will, of human service providers that received a 2 percent increase. And the philosophy behind that and the logic behind that was that they were within that group that had received consistent yearly raises in terms of provider rates. And then we had another group of providers that had not received an increase since 2001 and that group received a 3 percent increase each year. Now, if we extract developmental disabilities, again, that's on a...we're getting in a slippery slope, because we have other providers within that 2 percent grouping that would have quite compelling reasons and justifications for indicating or for having a raise themselves. We would not be extracting medically handicapped children