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LB 425

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. Senator Synowiecki said everything that I wanted to say. The only thing that I would add is that if we do this for this group of providers, take them out of the plan that we have with the 3 percent group and the 2 percent group, then while we're doing the next three amendments I'm going to prepare an amendment to increase it to all of those people in this group to 3, this amount, the 3 percent, and the other group to 4 percent. Once we get going on this, it is totally unfair not to treat all the providers with a similar way of doing things. And so I don't...I don't mean that as a threat, and I haven't...I have stuck with the Appropriations recommendations throughout this process, but I will veer from that if this happens, and that will be the first time I've done that since we've debated the bill. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Thompson. Senator Byars, followed by Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. And in the interest of time, I will not turn my light on again. I'd respond to any questions that anyone has. I think the case has been made. I don't think...and I don't want to fault the Appropriations Committee, they're very bright, they work very hard, Senator Thompson, Senator Synowiecki, Senator Pederson, all the other members, but you're talking about direct care staff in the DD field that is totally, completely different than direct care staff in the other areas that you're talking about. And you talk about entry level wages, you are talking apples and oranges. You talk about the type of services provided and there are not similarities in the type of services that are provided. I think it's very, very clear, if you look at the two years, the Cash Fund, you look at the ongoing commitment that we have, I would expect everyone in this body that I have on the sheet in front of me who voted just a couple of amendments ago on LB 425, on Senator Pederson's amendment, that didn't seem to have any trouble whatsoever with going with a two-year commitment for \$15 million and what that would do to the base in two years. I guess somebody needs to explain to me the difference of why we could support \$15 million, which I voted for because I want to