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May 17, 2005

LB 312

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Beutler, would you yield to a question?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Sure.

SENATOR MINES: Thank you. Senator, I apologize for not having gone through the amendment, but occurred...an idea just occurred to me. There's a presumption that most or all of the employees would be on some form of a healthcare plan with the company. At least that's my presumption, is the majority of the employees would be on the employer-provided health plan. If we have an employer that has very few employees, let's say ten, and they qualify for one of the incentives, and many of those employees choose not to become part of the plan because their spouse is...has a healthcare plan somewhere else that's of equal or more benefit, how might that impact what we're doing here?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well, first of all, I doubt if there would be any corporation that had ten employees that would qualify for this. Maybe on the lowest tier, but that would be an unlikely situation. But as far as the construction of the amendment is concerned, the idea is that every company should be paying a fair share of the overall healthcare costs. And to do that, then you would...your construction should say that every company pays at least some minimal percentage to the effort to provide healthcare or some substitute therefor, which would be what the fund would be...would do. And that requirement wouldn't change based upon the fact that in some cases it may be the other spouse that has healthcare, and your employee is on that healthcare. That will tend to even out, I would think, over time and with different companies.

SENATOR MINES: Perhaps. And just from my own experience, I recall that when I was with the city of Blair, our healthcare plan was very good. However, healthcare plans in other larger businesses in the area were superior. And I'm going to guess that maybe half of our employees were on healthcare with some other provider, not through the city. And I may be taking my concept a little further than is necessary. But I'm just curious, if in fact an employer's plan doesn't measure up to