

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

May 17, 2005

LB 312

have this year, by our actions, absorbed entirely all the new money, and then some. We have just gobbled it all up at one time. And maybe that's what we need to do. But you're putting yourselves in some danger of jeopardy a couple years off when you have to face the deficit that is currently showing. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Synowiecki, there are no further lights on. You're recognized to close on AM1609 to LB 312.

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Thank you, Senator Cudaback, members. Senator Thompson labeled this as a gentle approach, and it is. It is a very measured, very cautious approach to begin to incorporate our healthcare into our state's business incentive program. And you know, companies that are good corporate citizens and that are providing adequate healthcare coverage to their employees and their families, quite frankly, I should...I think they should be rewarded. And I think that they should be rewarded under the parameters of LB 312. If they are indeed offering this coverage to their employees, they should get this additional benefit. Other states have been much more overreaching relative to healthcare packages with their job incentive initiatives. You know, in order for citizens to engage and participate in the economic development that's envisioned under LB 312, I think that this is a very important part of this. And as I have said many, many times on the floor, that, you know, a family's assets can be completely depleted, you know, one trip to the emergency room. And this, in some small way, incentivizes within public policy for our corporate companies...for our corporate citizens out there to offer some degree of health insurance benefits for their employees. Yeah, this may cause LB 312 to be a bit more expensive. I don't think it's going to be that much, quite frankly. But we...I think we need to balance that thought with our expenditures and our public health system, exceeding \$400 million for 2005 for Medicaid alone. I think we need to utilize the incents available under LB 312 to help mitigate costs to our public health systems. And this is one very, very small step. Again, it's a very measured approach, very cautious approach. I think I can say here on the floor, the business community,