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FLOOR DEBATE

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cost-of-living adjustment relative to this issue, so we give people the dignity of being able to set aside a few of their assets, their remaining assets, to be able to pay for a burial. So as part of this legislation, there is a cost-of-living adjustment that is included and does become adjusted annually, based on the Consumer Price Index, in order to keep better pace with rising costs. Philosophically, obviously, you can look at this and raise the question, should we, in effect, if...this is what deals with the fiscal...if you increase this \$1,000 that can be set aside, people can...will qualify for Medicaid earlier. That creates additional General Fund and matching federal fund dollars that we as a state are obligated to pay. That funding, that dollar amount, is very speculative at best, but we can talk about that some on the fiscal note. But LB 85 itself is fairly straightforward, increasing the set-aside from \$3,000 to \$4,000 and adding a cost-of-living adjustment. And I would ask that LB 85 be advanced.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Byars. You've heard the opening on LB 85. Open for discussion. Senator Chambers, followed by Senator Louden. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. There are committee amendments, as stated by the Clerk. I apologize. Senator Jensen, Chairman of the committee, you're recognized to open.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. The amendment to LB 85 is a technical amendment, very short. On page 2, line 9, we strike the word "department" and insert "Department of Health and Human Services," and after "annually," insert "September 1," and in line 27 strike "each year" and insert "annually on September 1." That is really all the amendment does, strictly technical in nature, and I would urge its adoption.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Jensen. You've heard the opening on the committee amendments offered by Senator Jensen. Open for discussion. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I'd like to ask Senator Jensen a question, if he'll answer.