

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

February 10, 2006 LB 85A

to...

SENATOR JENSEN: Thirty-six percent of the state budget goes to HHS.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: So that would run into more than hundreds of millions of dollars?

SENATOR JENSEN: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay, but anyway, it's a large amount.

SENATOR JENSEN: It is a large amount.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: If you had a business which was dealing in the amounts of money each year that comprise the budget of HHS, would this amount of money cause you heartburn if you had to find a way to absorb it? Say you had not budgeted for it, you had not planned for it, then you find out from the IRS that if you don't pay this then somebody is going to jail. Would this amount be of any consequence?

SENATOR JENSEN: Oh, it is all relative. There isn't any question about it that, however, in HHS, they have assigned different dollars for different things, and I think they do a very good job in doing that and assuring that the taxpayers are well represented and get their money's worth, certainly the best they can. You know, when you look at the overall dollars of this bill, it's not...and in comparison to the overall budget, it's not a large amount of money. But it is a piece of money, and as Senator Wehrbein used to tell us all the time, that...and now Senator Pederson, that a dollar here and a dollar here, and pretty soon we're talking about a lot of dollars, a lot of millions. So it's relative. But certainly, Health and Human Services have an appropriation, or have requested appropriations from the Appropriations Committee, so we'll see how all that works out in the budget. I can tell you personally, my mother-in-law passed away about 18 months ago, and it's very, very tough to do a funeral for \$3,000. And matter of fact, we, I think, were very frugal, and still it was about \$7,000, which I think is about typical here in the state of Nebraska.