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FLOOR DEBATE

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states where it's been a challenge on whether you call these people who haul a family member or even a neighbor. They aren't liveried, and the insurance companies in case law states very clearly that there is not responsibility, other than that of the regular insurance that a person would carry. So with that, Mr. President, I would close on my opening on LB 1069, and ask for your positive advancement. I know the committee has several amendments, and I am definitely in support of those.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Byars. You've heard the opening on LB 1069. As stated by the Clerk, there are Transportation, Telecommunications amendments. Chairman Baker, you're recognized to open.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members. Senator Byars did an excellent job of framing what's in the bill. We had a good hearing on it. The committee decided if what Senator Byars proposed, maybe we could even expand on it a little bit. So the committee amendment allows HHS to reimburse the cost of transportation to an individual providing transportation to an eligible person. I think Senator Byars' original bill was a nonbinding...nonlegal binding relative. We expand that just a bit. And as he said, quite often, transportation is lacking in rural areas, even in urban areas. You have to call, get it arranged, and sometimes it's not too timely. But what we've done with the committee...the committee did is expand this just a bit. It says an individual is...this individual is under contract with the Nebraska Health and Human Services System and provides transportation to eligible person and the eligible person has chosen the individual to provide the transportation. So this eligible person isn't going to get stuck with someone. They have to actually approve this individual, and then that individual has to apply to HHS. That individual, if accepted by HHS--and the department has the ability in the committee amendment to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to implement this process--then that person can be reimbursed. So any individual that meets these criteria, they'll be under contract with HHS. They're actually chosen by that individual to provide transportation. They can be reimbursed for their cost. As Senator Byars said, insurance is not a problem so long as they're reimbursed and not a for-hire