

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

March 14, 2006 LB 1060

health centers, certified rural health clinics, hospitals, et cetera, et cetera. Look at that list. Show me the one that doesn't offer, or couldn't offer, family planning services. They all do; they all do, including the existing providers. All of the existing providers are not knocked out by this amendment. They're included. They get to bid for a new contract. They know that. They're all included. It simply opens the door to other providers, as well, because we've got women traveling 50, 75, 91 miles to get a Pap smear? Come on, that's ridiculous. That's absolutely ridiculous, not when we've got 450 providers, 450 providers under the Every Woman Matters Program? And we've got 14 providers under this program? That makes no sense at all. This amendment simply opens up the process for more providers to bid, and it's timely, because HHS is now about to issue a solicitation for new bidders under this program. This is the time to change it. Senator Don Pederson says, why are we doing this on the budget bill? He knows why we're doing this on the budget bill. Because this program exists only in budget language. It exists nowhere else in statute. It was put in the budget in 1991; it's been put in every biennium thereafter. It exists nowhere else in statute, except for in the budget. This is the most appropriate place to address this question. Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor.

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Thank you, Senator Foley. Senator Brown.

SENATOR BROWN: The...Mr. President, members, the line in the amendment that everyone should look to is the line that says the department may contract with a provider who provides some but not all of the services described in this section, if necessary, to provide for the availability of such services. And so the availability of certain of these procedures would be less likely to occur statewide, as a result of the adoption of this amendment. But I wish to further my conversation with Senator Pederson, and I think that he is off the floor. Senator Pederson, would you yield to some more questions, please?

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Senator Pederson.

SENATOR Dw. PEDERSEN: (Microphone malfunction) I'll try.