

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

April 3, 2006

LB 1248

foundation to begin this process. Medicaid reform must be approached boldly, but it also must be approached incrementally. The best interests of people of the state of Nebraska are and always must be the primary concern and motivation for reform. Medicaid reform must include dedicated leadership, thoughtful scholarship, accurate and complete information, and genuine compassion. Also fiscal responsibility, creativity, bipartisan cooperation and input, and must be considered more than just Medicaid. The Medicaid program involves a balancing of needs and resources. The Medicaid program or any publicly funded program of medical assistance cannot by itself meet the healthcare needs of all of our needy citizens. Medicaid reform should also consider the goal as with welfare reform of encouraging personal responsibility and the transition from dependence on public-funded Medicaid or medical assistance benefits as much as possible. Medicaid reform must consider and more closely be integrated with the state's nonmedical healthcare environment and the broader spectrum of healthcare provisions in Nebraska. This includes, among other things, the private healthcare sector, generally the private healthcare long-term care insurance, employer-sponsored insurance, and the role of safety net providers who serve nonmedical eligible and uninsured Nebraskans. The goal of Medicaid reform should be the provision of available medical assistance funding for the greatest benefit to the most people with maximum flexibility and controlled expenditure growth. Government cannot meet all of the needs that exist and it should not be asked or expected to and should not attempt to do so. Medicaid reform, therefore, depends on a public-private partnership to do what government alone cannot do. Medicaid plays a virtually important role and, therefore, cannot be abandoned. The goal of fiscal sustainability is important so that Medicaid will be strong and stable resource for future generations of Nebraskans. The goal of LB 1248 is to facilitate real and lasting Medicaid reform. It marks the beginning of a very important process, but we must be committed to see it through. I want to thank my colleagues for their interest and commitment to reform of this very critical program. I certainly want to thank all of those who have worked so tirelessly in 2005 to go out to all parts of the state to enlist from the citizens their interest, their concerns. I want to thank also the committee that was formed of