

January 17, 1984

LB 496

wrong. I urge the body to defeat the bill. Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Marsh.

SENATOR MARSH: Thank you, Speaker Nichol, and members of the Legislature, when I came to the Legislature this morning I intended to oppose LB 496. However, I have some questions, I need a response before I can make that final decision. Senator Vard Johnson, I heard you say, or I think I heard you say that you have had actual experience with persons who thought they had health insurance and their employer took funds from their paycheck and in fact did not pay their insurance so that they suffered because their insurance was not in effect. Is that true?

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: That is correct.

SENATOR MARSH: Can you document...I don't need names, but can you document that this has happened more than one time?

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Yes, I certainly can, Senator Marsh. I have had come to me as a private lawyer two different clients and they came in within the last three years with the very problem that I just simply described. They had different employers, mind you, withhold money from their paycheck as their premium contribution to the group health and accident plan, and their employers fell on hard economic times, as Senator Barrett talks about, and simply took the money. The insurance coverage lapsed. The employer ultimately went belly-up. And both cases involved pregnancies. Both cases involved pregnancies and there was no pregnancy coverage.

SENATOR MARSH: I expect that I really need some additional information for when the bill was explained to me in my office it was my understanding that it had more to do with other types of funds from employers, from employees' wages. It was explained to me that it was the employer's share of something rather than taking dollars from an employee. That, number one, makes a difference in the way I look at a bill. The second item is that it was explained not as part of a health insurance package and the third item is that if it truly is part of a health insurance package and who is being hurt? It is the family or the woman who finds she