

March 7, 1984

LB 886

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. President and members of the body, my amendment is very simple. If the bargain is about to be broken, then the bargain should be broken. My amendment would simply continue to require the counties to pay 14 percent of the Medicaid cost. Now as you may recall, this year the counties' share of the Medicaid cost is to fall from 14 percent to 9 1/3 percent, and the next year it is to fall from 9 1/3 percent to 4 2/3 percent, and the following year it is to terminate totally. Senator Warner, I believe, has included approximately \$8 million in the state budget to pick up the obligation that we arrived at last year as part of our understanding, but part of that understanding was premised on the fact that the counties would be responsible for the people that still fell within the cracks, the sick-poor, and they would be responsible under state standards. The counties have come back and the counties have broken the deal. They gave their word. They repudiated their word. And if the counties can repudiate their word, then I can repudiate mine and you can repudiate yours. We might as well save \$8 million from the state budget. And all my amendment does is simply say that as before the counties shall pick up 14 percent of the Medicaid cost.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Labedz, did you wish to speak to this amendment? Senator Kahle, did you wish to speak to this amendment?

SENATOR KAHLE: Yes, I sure do. Thank you, Mr. President. I don't know what agreement he is talking...that Senator Johnson is talking about. The agreement that I would like to read to you was the one that we made, the first one in 522. "In 1982 Governor Thone proposed to have the state assume the entire welfare program of Nebraska except the medical services provided to the poor. Thone's proposal included the state takeover of the federal, state and county funded Medicaid, the federal, state and county funded catastrophic illness, the federal and county funded emergency assistance and the county funded general assistance. Governor Thone carved out the medical services for general assistance and left this entirely county funded