

ASSISTANT CLERK:        26 ayes, 0 nays on the adoption of Senator Wickersham's amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: The Wickersham amendment is adopted. Is there anything further on the bill? Is there any further discussion on LB 99? Seeing none, Senator Wickersham waives closing. The question before you is the advancement of LB 99. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Please record.

CLERK: 31 ayes, 0 nays. Madam President, on the advancement of LB 99.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: LB 99 advances. LB 531.

CLERK: LB 531, a bill originally introduced by Senator Warner. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 18, referred to the Banking Committee, advanced to General File. There are committee amendments pending by the Banking, Commerce, and Insurance Committee.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: The Chair recognizes Senator Fisher to open on the committee amendments.

SENATOR FISHER: Madam President, just a little bit of explanation on LB 531. This bill would amend a part of insurance that was enacted in 1994. Last year the bill passed, LB 718, which provides for health insurance coverage which shall not impose a difference, fee or copayment for using or not using a mail-order pharmacy. LB 531 was introduced this year which would simply repeal that which was enacted in 1994. The committee amendments, however, are an attempt to find some middle ground. The committee amendments will become the bill. They would leave the 1994 language in place, but would add an exception to those for the case of long-term maintenance drugs. The committee amendments redefine the long-term maintenance drugs as medications which are dispensed pursuant to a single prescription for a period of no less than 180 days, exclusive of authorized refills. For the ongoing treatment of a chronic medical disorder or disease of a congenital condition or disorder, the committee amendments would allow people with medical conditions requiring maintenance drugs often for long-term condition to get such drugs through mail-order and achieve significant savings. Some of these drugs can be quite expensive and mail-order can mean savings of hundreds of dollars for people who must take these types of medication. Should