

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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LB 559

Thank you, Madam President.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Thank you, Senator Kristensen. Before we move to the committee amendments, the Legislature would like to welcome a number of fourth graders visiting us today. First of all, Senator Cudabæk would like to announce that we have 50 fourth graders from Bryan Elementary in Lexington. (Introduced teachers.) Would you please stand to be recognized by your Legislature. Welcome. The second group of fourth graders in the north balcony are here as guests of Senator Stuhr. They are 21 fourth graders from Seward Elementary School, Seward, Nebraska, and their teacher. You also please stand and let us welcome you to the Nebraska Legislature. Senator Jensen, on the committee amendment. (Standing Committee amendment AM0418 is found on page 774 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. First of all, I want to say I'm very pleased to make LB 559 my personal priority bill. I think this will give rural Nebraskans the same access to healthcare that all those throughout the state in the metropolitan areas have. The potential of telehealth in this state, especially for rural Nebraska, is truly significant, and what can be done through telehealth is almost beyond the imagination. I was visiting just a week ago with the chancellor of the Med Center in Omaha and he said that telehealth is really the wave the future, and certainly for us to have this in Nebraska would be a marvelous thing. I'll just briefly explain the committee amendments to the bill which were brought to the committee by Senator Kristensen. Then I've also joined Senator Kristensen in offering an amendment to this bill. The committee amendment essentially does six things. It inserts word "Nebraska" before every "Medicaid enrolled provider". This means that the state would only offer Medicaid reimbursement to practitioners licensed in Nebraska as Nebraska Medicaid providers. It changes the definition of telehealth from the green copy of the bill. It removes language which says that noncompliance with informed consent provisions of the bill constitute unprofessional conduct under the uniform licensing law. It changes the effective date of the bill from July 1, '99, to January 1, 2000. It clarifies that e-mail consultations are now eligible for Medicaid reimbursement under the bill, and it makes technical and