

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

April 11, 2000 LB 480

this bill were to pass without an appropriation, or the Governor indicated that the department had funds to operate the commission and it would not need an appropriation. Now, I would ask Senator Schimek to, if she has time to verify this, or even Senator Crosby. But we spent some time with the Governor and discussed the fact that whether this bill would meet with his approval, if it did not require an A bill, and that's precisely where we are now. This bill does not require an A bill. And the Governor indicated to us that the Department of Health and Human Services could operate this program and this commission with its present staff and without an appropriation. And when we left that meeting, that was my distinct impression. And I have informed Senator Wehrbein of this fact that this bill does not need an A bill. Having said that, I want to give you a little background. Last summer I was invited to speak at a women's health retreat at Ogallala. I thought that there would be 25 or 30 women there. I got there, there were 275 women concerned about Women's Health Initiatives. In the meeting I was the only man. It was somewhat of a pleasure (laughter), and I spoke to them and assured them of my support for this program, because if you look at the statistics it's overwhelming. Women live six to seven years longer than men, and because of that suffer a number of diseases in different ways than men do. Rheumatoid arthritis causes pain and disability to 1.5 million women; breast cancer causes the death of 43,000 women a year; ovarian cancer, 14,500; diabetes affects 8.1 million American women; Alzheimer's disease causes death in 14,000 women a year; osteoporosis causes two fractures in American women every minute. This is a specialized area of medicine. I don't want to be too personal, but I have two children who are doctors; one is a girl or a young woman and one is my son, who's been doctor of the day here many times (laugh). And I get a lot of medical advice, free medical advice from my own children, and they don't pull any punches when they talk to me. And I've discussed this subject with them and they both confirm the fact that medical science, the medical profession needs a little encouragement to focus sometimes on the specialized medical problems of women. I think this is an essential commission. It's an essential commission...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.