

April 20, 1979

LB 138

mencing in January 1, 1980; 12½% commencing July 1, 1981, and then on July 1, 1982, and thereafter, the county would still pay 10% of the cost of the medical assistance. This is not exactly what the counties would like to see, I am sure because they would very much like to get rid of this whole burden but being realistic we have decided that this would be a step in the right direction and I move for the adoption of the amendments to the amendment.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Schmit. Is Senator Schmit in the chamber? The Chair recognizes Senator Frank Lewis. Oh, all right.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, I just want to say that I support the committee amendments. I think they are in line and I think they are a part of the commitment that was made a number of times to counties that would take the state and put it into a greater portion of participation insofar as these payments are concerned. Senator Kahle has outlined several times that the counties really do not have any voice in the amount of those payments. Those payments have escalated a great deal. This Legislature has seen fit over the years to place restraints upon the amount of money the counties can spend. I just want to say that when we put a lid on the counties at 7% and we turn around and force them to pay a 20% of the health care costs, that somewhere along the line something is going to have to give. I would hope that it would not be those people who need those benefits at the county level because I am certain that there is going to be a demand on those counties for road improvements, for many other responsibilities and the number of people who demand the services that are provided under this bill are in the minority and so it would be evident to me that those people are the ones who would be shortchanged if anyone is going to be shortchanged. I want to emphasize again this morning as I drove in from Butler County, the roads in Butler County are a mess through no fault of anyone except the fact that we have had a terrible winter. We are going to find that those counties are going to be hard pressed for funds and I think it is only fair that the state accept some of this responsibility and increase some of this responsibility. I rise again, in support of the committee amendments and hope that they would be adopted.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Frank Lewis. Oh, all right. The Chair recognizes Senator Goodrich.