

and the directives that the bill provides for the council? You would object to the funding...?

SENATOR MURPHY: None, whatever, just asking to strike that new language that is providing funding that we have not provided before.

SENATOR WESELY: Okay, that is all I need. Thank you. I would like to follow up then with a comment. I can understand Senator Murphy's concern and we all know that the Governor has said he does not want to add new commissions or boards this year and we can appreciate the concern about that, however, this is one instance I believe the additional funding and the additional responsibilities we provide in LB 773 are most appropriate and would, in fact, perhaps save us money rather than cost the state more money because what we call for here is an assessment of services in the state for the handicapped and that is in the broadest sense of the term and we have needed that assessment for a long time. It is going to be an undertaking that is going to cost some money. There is going to be a need for some staff assistance. The cost of this bill is, I believe, \$32,000 which is not a great amount of money but it is significant and we should be concerned about its cost. However, it is money well spent in my mind because in the study we undertook in LR 137 we found that there was very little understanding of the interrelationship of services and programs in this state for the handicapped, that there was a need for coordination, there was a need for oversight, there was a need to see where we were, where we were going and what we ought to be doing and I have been involved in this area for some time as a member of the Legislature. I have been very concerned about the services we provide and the need to provide them efficiently and effectively. I think the council is a good forum for taking care of those assessments that we need in coordinating the programs and services we now have. So my feeling is that although I understand the concern of Senator Murphy, that this would be money well spent, there isn't a need to strike that language because if you do that you have responsibilities, you have directives but you don't have the resources to carry those out and Senator Beutler knows the council has...the Coordinating Council has been in effect for a number of years but because they hadn't the resources and they hadn't the directive and initiative to carry out the responsibilities they already had, we weren't getting any coordination out of them. We weren't getting the work that we needed to have done and so to strip away from them the resources they need to finally do the job that they were supposed to do years ago, I