

commissioners to do so. Now with the adoption of this amendment that is on your desk, what you will then have is a bill that on July 1, 1983 would say that the welfare programs in the State of Nebraska are to be administered by the Nebraska Department of Public Welfare and not by any county subdivisions, that commencing July 1, 1983 counties will have to pick up only 12% of the medicaid cost, on July 1, 1984 10% of the medicaid cost, on July 1, 1985 8% of the medicaid cost, on July 1, 1986 6% of the medicaid cost, on July 1, 1987 4%, July 1, 1988 2%, and then it is all gone. That is with the committee concept of phasing down the county share of medicaid, that will still be retained once this amendment is adopted. But this amendment when adopted and this bill when passed will, come July 1, 1983, put the State of Nebraska in the substantial majority column of states that administer their welfare programs. At this time I would move the amendment.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Cullan on the amendment.

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I will address the bill later and I am supporting the bill and I am also supporting Senator Johnson's amendments and I will outline in a little more detail when we get to the bill itself why I think this is a very meritorious proposal and why this is precisely the time that we should take this decisive step to reform the welfare system in the State of Nebraska, but to address the amendments, whether you support Senator Johnson's concept of moving from county administered welfare system to a state administered system or not, I believe that you would be wanting to support the committee amendments. I think it is necessary primarily because this bill was delayed one year and the phase in approach that the committee had set up under 522 is a year out of date because we had envisioned this bill had it been enacted effective already and so that is the main reason that I think that the amendments need to be adopted. The second point, the major reason I think the amendments need to be adopted is they call for eliminating a provision of the committee amendments which would have prohibited a welfare office, a county welfare office, from being closed without the approval of the county commissioners. Since the state would be completely funding the operation of the county welfare offices, I think that the state ought to have the flexibility to reduce the number of employees in administering the welfare system and to design a delivery system which is more effective and so, therefore, really the benefits of LB 522 are not achieved to a substantial extent if that committee amendment is retained. So I would urge you at this point in time then to adopt Senator