

March 31, 1982

LB 942

SENATOR CULLAN: I would simply like to inquire what the current state of the bill is as far as Senator Higgins' amendment is concerned in. What is prohibited and what isn't prohibited? Senator Newell, could you explain what remains on the Higgins amendment?

SENATOR CLARK: Turn it on.

SENATOR NEWELL: Yes, the Higgins amendment precludes the payment, the reimbursement for association dues and so you still may be reimbursed for required educational workshops but union dues...I mean association dues are prohibited.

SENATOR CULLAN: I think you were correct with the union dues probably, but at any rate, Senator Higgins, I wonder if you would respond to a question. How is this going to work mechanically? You are familiar with the reimbursement systems that we use for Medicaid. What kind of an accounting system is going to be used or how are you going to factor these costs out of the charges?

SENATOR HIGGINS: I think that question should be directed to Senator Newell since he is the one that has amended my amendment.

SENATOR CULLAN: Actually it is your amendment still remaining though. I just don't understand how your amendment is going to function mechanically.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Well, it should function the same way the Department of Welfare has been functioning all along except that now instead of the Department of Welfare, I mean as my amendment originally was, the Department of Welfare supposedly audited, checked to see if they were really paying for educational seminars or not. With my amendment it said that they would not have to reimburse them for dues to any professional association. Senator Newell is right when he says we mandate they take educational courses but we don't mandate they belong to any association but we do pay their dues to join those associations. So what I am saying is my amendment as written would say no longer will the Department of Welfare pay the dues for nursing home personnel to join any association they want to join. I think it is simple just to write "no" when they send in the voucher for it. I don't think that is a hard thing at all. But now since Senator Newell has amended it, I guess it is going to be more work for the Department of Welfare.