

Senator Labeledz will be next, then Senator Beutler, then Senator Haberman, then Senator Lamb. Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It surprises me from year to year how our attitudes change and how our decisions are made from year to year on different subject matters. A short time ago I read you what Senator Vard Johnson said on the floor on LB 7 during the special session in November, 1981 where he said that we should continue the policy today and forever. I have a small section of what Senator Wesely said on that day. He says, "I think it is clear that there are benefits that are derived from providing assistance at the point at which pregnancy is discovered and make sure that the child is cared for properly, that the mother is well fed and that any effort to do otherwise does not look to us as a reasonable alternative because we have done some research and it is clear that development disabilities in handicaps, retardation, result from the fact that a pregnant woman does not take care of herself and you can really cause a great deal of problems if that woman does not have the financial resources to care for that unborn child." I go on and take the opportunity now to strongly oppose the committee amendments. The committee amendments to LB 31 is a major policy change which has not had a public hearing this session. This bill is not a minor reduction in a program, it is a major change in how this state will deal with unborn children. This issue should have a public hearing like all other issues, minor as well as major. Secondly, LB 31 is a penny-wise and pound foolish amendment. Our current state policy of making ADC available to eligible low income pregnant women helps to reduce the premature birth and low birth weight babies at a cost which the state will dearly pay for in the long run. There is a strong correlation between low birth weights and physical or mental impairments and much of the cost for the care of these people will fall ultimately on Nebraska taxpayers.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Excuse me, Senator Labeledz. (Cavel.) Let's hold our conversation down. There are several pockets that are making quite a little noise and we are having difficulty...including the news section, including the news people. Let's hold it down so that we can hear Senator Labeledz. Thank you all. Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: The chances for low birth weight children increase under the following, the poverty, the poor