

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 782 was introduced by Senator Withem. (Title read.) It was first read on January 8 of this year, referred to the Health and Human Services Committee for hearing. The bill was advanced to General File. There are committee amendments pending, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Wesely, please.

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members, LB 782 was brought to the Legislature by Senator Withem and referred to the Health Committee. We did review this legislation. It deals with a mandatory minimum number of nursing home beds dedicated to Medicaid patients. We've had, out of the two hundred and some nursing homes in the state, I believe six are now all private pay. That is, they do not take any public's pay patients in their nursing home and thus, they are able to charge a higher rate than they are for Medicaid which is set by state statute in terms of their reimbursement. This situation caused a problem in Papillion, as Senator Withem will tell you about, and he brought in this bill to require 20 percent of all beds being dedicated to Medicaid. The committee amendment will reduce that to 10 percent, but I understand Senator Withem has an amendment to this that has been worked on by a number of people and so I'll leave at this point the rest of my...well, allow Senator Withem to explain his amendment which I would support.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Withem, the amendment you had printed, Senator, I understand you want to withdraw those. Mr. President, Senator Withem would move to amend the committee amendments. (Withem amendment appears on pages 1341-42 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Withem, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. President, members of the body, although I did withdraw the amendment that was on page 1298 of the Journal, conceptually, it is still the same thing that I'm doing here. We have just redrafted it as an amendment to the committee amendments for purposes of facilitation. Let me talk a little bit about the problem as Senator Wesely described it. What we're dealing with here is probably one of the biggest problems we are going to have