

in the nursing care thing that I don't think this is a big step.

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you, Senator Withem. Not having sat on Public Health and Welfare and I appreciate that explanation and I'm very well aware what percentage of our budget it does take. Thanks.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Higgins, please.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. A year or so ago, way out west, probably near the Speaker's district, there was a nursing home that had repeatedly and repeatedly violated the Health Department's rules and regulations. And I called them up and I asked them, how many times are you going to let this nursing home get by with this? I said, you've got the power now to put them into receivership and appoint a new administrator. And the answer was, if we close the nursing home down, ultimately, if we have to, it would be such a traumatic effect on those elderly people, and I mean elderly, in their eighties, in their nineties, that moving them to another nursing home could in itself kill them. And he said, that's why we are so hesitant about putting that particular home into receivership because of its poor management. We're trying to get a good administrator in there and work with them. I can understand Senator Nelson's concerns about private enterprise, but let me tell you what happened in 1982. Continental Care Homes had 16 nursing homes for sale in Nebraska. They were bought out by Beverly Enterprises in Minneapolis. Now, the state average for Medicaid patients was something like 48 or 49 percent and that's what Beverly Enterprises was buying. Instead of buying the nursing homes who had fewer Medicaid patients, they were making so much money off of Medicaid, they wanted those nursing homes that were getting Medicaid payments. In spite of the fact they kept saying, we're losing money on Medicaid, they didn't go after the nursing homes that had fewer Medicaid patients. I think this is a good bill in that once an industry has taken your life savings and everything you have and you've nothing left but Medicare and Medicaid, don't they have a moral obligation to continue to take care of you when you spent all that you could? You know, in Omaha you might talk 2 to \$3,000 a month, so you figure 24 to \$36,000 a year, how long is it going to take you? If you go farther outstate, I think the prices are a little bit cheaper because labor is cheaper out