

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, again, the major item here is that this bill, the Health Department sat down with the different licensure boards, and there are close to 20 of those, worked through the statutes in terms of how they are licensed, the continuing education, different licensure on an annual basis, provisions that they have. They tried to bring them together into some sort of coordinated fashion, the statutes, and also to allow them more flexibility in setting the fees. One of the handouts that you have received would indicate the impact if we don't get the fees adjusted. What we do when we license these groups is the fees are there to cover the cost of licensure, and right now some of those are under assessed and so there is a cost there, and unless we allow them some flexibility in setting the fees to cover those costs, we have a difficulty. So there are two major items, they go to biennial licensure which cuts down cost and makes it more efficient and, secondly, it allows for fees to be set on the cost of providing for the licensure for those groups. So I think in terms of the reason that it is up as a special order is the need to get this through to deal with the funding problems and cover the cost of these operations.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Thank you. Mr. Clerk, I believe we have amendments.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Chronister would move to amend the bill. Senator Chronister's amendment is on page 1052 of the Journal.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Chronister.

SENATOR CHRONISTER: Thank you, Mr. President and members. The amendment is being passed out, and as far indicated, it is on page 1052 of your Journal. The amendment is very simple. Currently, prospective student embalmers or those wanting to become a mortician are required to attend one year of mortuary school and then serve one year internship. This amendment simply provides an option for students that would provide them the chance of serving a six-months internship prior to entering mortuary school, and then serving the remaining six-months internship after graduation. The other option, of course, would be to serve the full twelve-month internship as currently provided in the law. The reason for this amendment is that there are some students who might have second thoughts about entering the profession and this allows them an opportunity to gain firsthand experience in a funeral home or a mortician