

September 29, 1992 LB 20

those women who are receiving the benefits right now, would continue to receive those benefits for October and November, give them a little buffer rather than cutting them off cold. But commencing December 1, ADC payments would not commence at the...as soon as pregnancy is medically determined. Rather, ADC payments would commence upon the birth of the child. The reason I brought the, I was willing to sponsor this bill was because I believed after looking at all the services available that there was in fact a safety net below these women to help absorb the shock of that difficult decision that we would make. Let's look at the services that are available. Number one, prenatal care would continue absolutely unaffected by this legislation. Prenatal care is available. Number two, Medicaid, the medical care for mother and baby will continue absolutely unaffected by this bill. Number three, food stamps will continue absolutely unaffected by this bill. Day care expenses paid, transportation allowances paid. All of these things that we've been hearing, these horrors, simply do not exist. Yes, these are poor women who could use the additional help and if the state had a surplus I would not be carrying the bill. But that's not the situation we find ourselves in. The question is, can the state afford this luxury at this time? And when I use the term luxury, I'm using luxury to the state. I realize it is not a luxury to the women who are involved. I think what we have to look at is when we're looking at making cuts elsewhere and every cut we make we have to remember is going to affect people. We can't say that when we make a cut in MIRF, when we make a cut in the National Guard's tuition remission allowance, when we make a cut anywhere else in the budget that it doesn't affect people because kids won't go to college, because if we cut off building some jobs will be lost, when we make cuts across the board on state agencies jobs are lost, when we consolidate programs, jobs are lost and everyone of those people is affected. We have tough decisions to make and every one of those decisions will impact people. So it is, regardless of what we do, some people are going to absorb the shock. The question is which of those people has some sort of a safety net below them which will help them to absorb that shock? I suggest in this case that those services are available, that they are being utilized. I think in this case and for this period of time, and I would remind the body that the bill as drafted is not as horrible as it's being made out to be, partly because it does not eliminate the program, an idea which several people on the floor that I've talked to would like to see done, would like to see the program eliminated in its entirety. What the bill does is it says at