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arbitrarily fall below a certain income level, you're out of luck. If you are in a situation where you're spending much more than your income, and the way it works in Medicaid you just spend down your income to a point at which you spend...you get 40 bucks a month to live on for your basic expenses. Outside of that, your income is shot, it goes all to cover the cost of Medicaid. So these people aren't getting any break whatsoever. They're spending down. It's can they get Medicaid match, Medicaid coverage beyond what they're able to pay for? And that arbitrary limit really doesn't seem sensible. Our suggestion is through the...and we're going to get into this later with the Medicaid task force, is we need to screen better for people in the nursing homes and do they need to be there. The question is if they need to be there, shouldn't we provide the help if they're financially in need of help?

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: Or...and instead of making it arbitrarily based on finances, shouldn't the decision be made more on medical need? It's a complicated issue but, again, I raise the point if there isn't an objection, it would make sense, to me, in fact, to divide this question, but if there is an objection and everybody wants it back in, I don't have any problem with it because the department would still have the authority to make cuts that they think are appropriate.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I'm not going to particularly get in the argument but I sit here thinking we like across-the-board cuts, here immediately is a program where the only purpose is, as a practical matter, it takes away the argument from the department of cutting some of these programs because the funds are there. You know, we're going to have these discussions time and time again over the next few months with across-the-board cuts and then we're going to...you know, we'll spend half our time criticizing the department because they don't identify what they're going to cut, and the other half criticizing for what they did. And that's how it works. I agree, these are all important programs, but if you're making cuts, something goes. And, from my viewpoint, the Legislature has the responsibility if they want to make cuts to also take part of the blame. You can't have the credit for the cut unless you are willing also to take the blame