

Rasmussen.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Rasmussen, would you respond, please.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: Yes.

SENATOR ABBOUD: Senator Rasmussen, I think one of the...the principal concern that has been raised in, and it has been raised by one of my school districts, is that there is a concern that if the federal funds are shut off somewhere down the road that the school districts will be responsible for these types of programs. How do you respond to something like that?

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: Thank you, Senator Abboud. First of all, there is no new responsibility for the school districts, none, nada, neant, zilch. There are no new responsibilities mandated through 520. The responsibility for the service coordination is in the Department of Social Services. It's primarily because of the funding vehicle through the Medicaid dollars as well as well as the other dollars that are appropriated for this activity. But if we suddenly don't have the Medicaid dollars, don't have the 1.2 million from the authorization for this act, it will fall back on the Department of Social Services to determine whether or not they want to prioritize this service coordination and continue it. It will not fall back on the school districts. It is not their responsibility.

SENATOR ABBOUD: If it does fall back, the federal funds are shut off, will the state automatically pick up these responsibilities or will we have to come back in and appropriate, or what would be the process after that if the federal funds are shut off?

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: Well, I guess there would be two options. One is the Department of Social Services could make decisions within their own budget, deciding whether or not they want to put dollars into this or, two, they would come back to general appropriations in legislation and say we no longer have the fed dollars, we think it's a worthwhile cause and we want to do this and ask for the dollars then. That's why I like the amendment being paired up with 520 because it gives us an opportunity to put all those things on the table that we're doing for families with children with disabilities and decide what our priorities ought to be and how to make the best use of the dollars.