

of containing costs and maintaining quality health and the way that you need to do that is to have an oversight of having consumers and purchasers of health care working with the providers to accomplish those goals. That's the vision of managed competition. That's the vision of these regionally based planning mechanisms. So I think what I am proposing fits in what providers are talking about in terms of networks, and that would be at the delivery level of services, and then it fits in with the idea of above that level you have consumers and the general public there overseeing that system and trying to provide for direction to that system to save money and increase access to health care. Now what are the consequences if we don't do something about the problem? This is a change. Change is hard and I know there's a lot of lobbyists employed by the various interests that are opposed to the bill. The nursing home industry, I don't know where they're at. The hospitals clearly are against it. The tobacco industry doesn't like the idea of a cigarette tax increase. There's not a whole lot of lobbyists out there on this side, on the consumer side, on the public side of this issue. We have got to be the advocates for the public. We have got to be the advocates for those who care about the cost of health care, who care about the quality of health care, who care about access to health care. The only advocates that the vast majority of Nebraskans have for those goals are sitting right here in this Chamber, the 49 of us. We've got to accomplish it. We've got to oversee and overlook some of the barriers that stand before us in the form of various interest groups and lobbyists that are there telling us that this is a bad idea and change is not good and that we ought to just stay where we're at. Well, we know change has got to occur. We know people want to see change in the health care system and this is a modest initiative that will help us prepare for greater change that will be happening I believe at the national level. Consequences, again, of not changing, well, if you look at one of the handouts again I have on health insurance, and we talked about this the other day with the budget package, in 1989 we had 33 million dollars we spent on insurance for health insurance for our public employees in the State of Nebraska, our state employees. That figure is now going to be, for this fiscal year it's estimated to be, 77 million dollars. So in a matter of four years we're going to go up 44 million dollars or 11 million dollars a year, so every year, every year essentially for the last four years we have had an 11 million dollar a year increase in just the insurance costs to cover state employees for their health, 11 million a year.