

is no program any more worthy of our tax dollars than the money for the disabled and I'm going to support this amendment. Thank you.

**SPEAKER BAACK:** Thank you, Senator Schellpeper. Before I proceed to the next speaker I would like to introduce the doctors of the day. Under the north balcony we have Dr. Mark Ptacek from O'Neill and Dr. Rebecca Eisenman from Leigh, Nebraska. Would you folks please stand and be welcomed by the Legislature. Thank you for being here. The next speaker, Senator Byars.

**SENATOR BYARS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with some hesitancy to be quite honest with you, not a hesitancy to support Senator Wesely's amendment which I will do so with vigor, but I rise because I'm forced to rise. I shouldn't have to. It shouldn't be necessary. The situation as it exists in the State of Nebraska for people with disabilities is unbelievable at this point and it's getting worse by the day. I get telephone calls from citizens that reside in many of your districts, those people who are absolutely and totally sick of trying to become involved in a system that rejects them. I'd like to talk for just a minute about a young woman who comes out of Senator Day's district, who wants to access services that are available, where there is space available. In Senator Moore's district, a young woman who has recently reached the mandatory age for public education and now is attempting to access services to be able to live as a full a life as she is capable of. There are absolutely no dollars available to assist her in doing that. This young woman is in a children's day care where she is ridiculed because these young children have no idea how to treat someone with disabilities. This is because we as a society, we as a State of Nebraska are not making funds available to take care of hundreds and hundreds of people coming out of our public education system that need the simplest of transition services to access services. This is unconscionable. I am a strong supporter of the University of Nebraska system. I will continue to be. Can I look, however, at restoring six or \$8 million in cuts to that system and look at people such as this young woman who are desperately in need of services and say, you're less important to me? No, I can't. Are we being faced with very serious crucial decisions? Yes. Are we going to have the courage to stand up to the powerful lobby behind the University of Nebraska and the educated folks who call us, plead with us, additional funding for CBA, additional funding for