

make choices. This is a choice, I think, that's the most important choice for the state in terms of the developmentally disabled and those programs out there for those kids. This is where we need to be spending our money. Senator Wesely mentioned...touched on the lawsuits that are pending. We may be revisiting this issue quicker than we would hope. But right now I think the \$4 million and the Byars amendment is the appropriate figure to be dealing with. If we have to address this in the budget or in veto overrides, we'll deal with that and then we'll have more choices to make, I guess, at that time. But I would urge the body to oppose Senator Moore's amendment at this time and support Senator Byars' amendment and then move on to the A bill. Thank you, Madam President.

**PRESIDENT ROBAK:** Thank you, Senator Hall. Senator Byars, your light is next, followed by Senator Vrtiska, Senator Jones, and Senator Warner.

**SENATOR BYARS:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to speak this one last time and let others have an opportunity to speak to the issue. As you all know, I feel very, very strongly about this and I think Senator Wesely and Senator Hall both made excellent points, one being that the original cost of this bill only would have brought us into line with what we need to spend today, and we're only spending about half of what we need to take care of all the people within the State of Nebraska. But I think one thing that we need to remember, and I always reluctantly bring these issues up, but I think it's so important for us to take into account the fact that it's one of those things of do it now or do it later. And I'll tell you, there isn't ever going to be a good time to find the money to spend that's needed. You're not going to have a good time next year, or the year after, or the year after that. I...when I first came in this body I was of the belief myself that the year will come where we're going to be able to do what we need to do for people with developmental disabilities and I found out that I was dead wrong. As I mentioned to you on General File, and I want you to understand it again today, this issue will be taken out of our hands if we don't make the decision to start moving forward with adequate funding. We will end up in a court battle that will force us to uphold what the statutes of the State of Nebraska tell us we need to do right now. We don't want to do that. We don't want the court to dictate to us. We don't want to provide services based on what the court says. We want to provide...do the decision-making ourselves on how we provide those services.