

Senator Wesely and Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Dierks. I wanted to point out once more that the ADC payment, as it presently stands, is only 36.7 percent of the poverty level. And I think that's a very telling statement. Remember, as I've said many times before, you have to have children before you're on ADC because it's Aid to Dependent Children. The basic number is \$293 for a mother and one child. She gets \$71 more for another child, and if she had 3 children, she would only be getting \$435 a month from ADC. The average...the average in Nebraska of families who are...women who are on...who are receiving ADC is a mother and one or two children. We don't have...we have very, very few that have more than one or two children, 75 percent of them. All of them live far below the poverty line. Children and parents receiving both ADC and food stamps live 33 percent below the poverty line. Children and parents receiving ADC, food stamps and energy assistance, which has been mentioned before, live 30 percent below the poverty line. A great majority of those recipients in Nebraska are white and they live outside of Douglas and Sarpy Counties. I want to bring that up, too, because I think a lot of you think that it's just a problem in big towns; that's not so. I passed around to you a letter which I appreciated so much from a doctor in...whose office is in my district, and they're a group of pediatricians who...and in his letter he says that he needs...he thinks we need to take a careful look at this bill because, even though he's supportive of getting families off welfare and into meaningful jobs, which we all are, we are all supportive of that, we are all supportive of what is so popularly known as welfare reform. But he goes on to say that too rapid removal of benefits, he's afraid, is going to harm children when it's not their fault that their parents are either unable or don't care to provide a living. So I...and the other side of the coin, as he mentions, is that many jobs are so low paying that they aren't going to have significant benefits to provide health care. And that's my whole point about bringing this amendment and anything else that I talk about, this bill has a lot of good points in it. The first two sections are very well thought out and I think they need to be enacted. The last part, for me, is a sort of a hodgepodge of a lot of ideas that were put together and I do feel strongly because I've talked to many of the members of the task force who were against a lot of this last part and they felt that they were not listened to at all. But the point is the two-year cutoff, that arbitrary cutoff and the family cap, I just simply