

new Governor at that time, Governor Kerrey, came in with legislation to postpone for another year the implementation of the state takeover for budget reasons. That prompted a good deal of discussion, and finally a compromise was adopted where the takeover was allowed to take place, but at the same time two programs, those being general assistance, and a program called county medical assistance were left at the county level. So those are the last vestiges of the county welfare system that were not eliminated by the ultimate takeover in 1983. The problem that this amendment seeks to point out is that some counties are very fearful that as LB 1224 passes and is implemented that perhaps because of new restrictions on the ability of an individual to receive state welfare benefits, such as the two-year limitations, things of that type, that ultimately there may be people that fall down to the level of having to receive county general assistance or county medical assistance and people that are typically currently are not eligible for these programs. The typical...the existence, by the way, I should explain, of general assistance and county medical assistance is basically as the assistance of last resort for an individual. And typically the individuals that qualify for these programs are single, they are able-bodied individuals that simply are unable to find adequate employment and, therefore, there's a need for society to chip in with some assistance for them. They don't qualify for the categorical programs, like Medicaid, like ADC, because typically they don't have a...they don't have children, and because of that they fall out of the category of the typical recipient for those larger programs. This tends to be, as I said, an able-bodied individual that simply is single and is unable to find adequate employment. The fear, on the part of some counties, is that they already have high property taxes, and if what LB 1224 becomes is simply a mechanism for redistributing who pays welfare benefits for taking an individual who, under the current system would qualify for continued Medicaid, for continued ADC, things of that type for continued general state assistance, that that individual may be, under the provisions of 1224, ultimately shifted down to the county level. And that a person who, as I said, at the present would qualify for continued state benefits would, at some point, be kicked out by the provisions of LB 1224 and then become a responsibility of the counties. Obviously, this is of great concern to counties out there because of the fact that these are property tax supported programs and there's a fear that this would incur a cost that is unforeseen that would have nothing to do with anything that the county had