

the only thing that we are talking about changing at this particular point in time are the AFDC cash grants. We are not talking about health care, we're not talking about energy assistance, not talking about changes in housing, or child care support, or food stamps. Those programs we are not talking about changing the eligibility for those programs at all. So I would concur with what Senator Hall was talking about earlier, that certainly the first half of this amendment is not needed at all because there will not be an impact on the health care delivery system for people that will fall back onto the counties. I'd also say that the way the bill has been amended to deal with the two-year limit it makes it very clear that if there's not a job available and we further clarify by saying that that job availability must reflect in income equal to at least the existing cash subsidy. So once again if that's the arrangements under which we have the cutoffs, then people should not be falling off in undue numbers unto the county responsibility, the way we've defined it here. I don't...I am concerned about the way it's worded. It sort of implies to me that they're excused of any responsibility, even the one they have presently, and I think the language is too broad as the amendment is written. And I would agree that the county does have some role to play in this, and that's one that we need to continue to explore. I think it will be important to analyze the information about the impact of 1224 on other support systems out there. But I guess I would continue to argue that I have a greater faith in people wanting to get off of welfare and taking advantage of many of the incentives that we've provided in 1224 for doing just that. I would urge that you oppose this amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Rasmussen. Senator Will.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. Senator Wesely, would you yield to a question or two?

SENATOR WESELY: Yeah.

SENATOR WILL: I think you probably answered this in the comments you made, and I appreciate that, but I'd like to ask it directly. Is it your understanding as the bill is constituted currently, with all the amendments that have taken place that you alluded to, is the intent of LB 1224 to provide a transfer of provision of welfare benefits from the state level to the county level?