

cost. But I would suggest to you that it's a far better system than what we have right now. The way it works right now is that welfare recipients begin to have to pay a copay, around 60 percent of poverty level, and that at 110 percent of poverty level they have to pay all of their child care costs. There are, under what we are proposing is that would be a very gradual increase in responsibility for the recipient to pay for that child care support. And we would extend our support up, as a state, to 185 percent of poverty. We have now also amended the bill so that we are doing the same thing with the health care. I would suggest that what we now have in place, in the form of a bill, suggests or provides a shared responsibility, not just the total state responsibility, but a shared responsibility between the welfare recipient and the state, and would urge you to continue your support for the bill as it is.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Pedersen.

SENATOR PEDERSEN: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I stand to support Senator Crosby's amendment. I definitely see it as a hand up instead of a handout. The last young lady I worked with came very close to, and one of her biggest problems in getting employment and going back to getting employment was not being able to have this kind of help. I really see it as a benefit, and I don't see it's going to be that big a burden on the state. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Pedersen. Senator...oh, there are no further lights on. Senator Crosby, to close.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. I do appreciate the...everyone who has talked about this. I want to point out to you just a couple of things in closing. The federal poverty guidelines show a family size of two children, woman...mother and two children, or father and two children, yearly income \$9,430, that's poverty level. One hundred and thirty-three percent would bring that up to 12,542, that's \$542 more than each one of us makes here in the Legislature. Would you like to try to live on that 12,000? I don't think you would, because in this present economy, in the nineties, that 12,000 doesn't go very far. It wouldn't help you run a car, wouldn't help you take care of your children, it wouldn't help you...and I know they have the other things, they have food stamps, and they have all that help, but there are a lot of things that are not covered with all those extra benefits. I do