

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
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Children's Behavioral Health Task Force
May 11, 2009

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The Children's Behavioral Health Task Force met at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, May 11, 2009, in Room 2102 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing. Members present: Senator Tim Gay, Chairperson; Senator Lavon Heidemann; Scot Adams; Beth Baxter; Ruth Henrichs; Candy Kennedy, Tom McBride; Kathy Moore; Terri Nutzman; and Todd Reckling. Members absent: Elizabeth Crnkovich. []

SENATOR GAY: Let's get going. And my goal is to be out of here at 9:45, not to rush it, but anyway, we'll get going. Let's just go around, do quick introductions and then we'll get started and go from there. Tim Gay, state senator. []

ANNE FARGEN: Anne Fargen, committee clerk. []

RUTH HENRICHS: Ruth Henrichs, Lutheran Family Services. []

SCOT ADAMS: Good morning. Scot Adams, director of Division of Behavioral Health. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Candy Kennedy, Nebraska Federation of Families. []

TOM McBRIDE: Tom McBride, Epworth Village. []

TODD RECKLING: Todd Reckling with the Division of Children and Family Services. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Official. (Laugh) []

SENATOR GAY: Officially now. []

BETH BAXTER: Official, yeah. Beth Baxter with Region III Behavioral Health Services.

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TERRI NUTZMAN: Terri Nutzman, administrator of OJS, within the Division of Children and Family Services. []

JEFF SANTEMA: Jeff Santema, committee counsel for the Health Committee in Senator Gay's office. []

SENATOR GAY: All right. And then I'm not sure if Senator Heidemann is coming. Anne is helping for Erin while she's away just for a short time. All right, we'll get going. We need to approve last month's...or approve this agenda. Jeff handed it out. And anyone want to approve that? We need a motion or something to approve. []

SCOT ADAMS: So move. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Second. []

SENATOR GAY: All those in favor say aye. Opposed? None. And then Jeff put the minutes of last month's meeting, if you want to take a second to look that over. Looks about...if anyone feels comfortable with those minutes, we could look for a motion to approve those. []

SCOT ADAMS: Move approval. []

BETH BAXTER: Second. []

SENATOR GAY: All right. All those in favor say aye. Opposed? None. All right. []

TERRI NUTZMAN: I just need to abstain from the vote since I wasn't here... []

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SENATOR GAY: Okay. []

TERRI NUTZMAN: ...last time. []

SENATOR GAY: Okay. We'll get that on the... []

ANNE FARGEN: Okay. []

SENATOR GAY: ...that Terri is going to...all right. Four, I think that's fine, Legislative update and discussion, and then we'll open that up too. Obviously, we're sitting...LB603 is on Final Reading. Jeff put some information in here about the different bills that were in there. I think, you know, you all obviously have followed the situation and we have pros and cons to anything here and that's kind of where we're at. I think the key on this was, you know, this is a starting point at some point. The thing I'm most excited about on this though, and I really do believe that with the group we have together of...we're up to nine senators who are going to be interested in these issues. It's not just nine people pulled out of the blue. The Exec Board will appoint those people and there's Judiciary, Health, and Appropriations, and I think that's key on anything we do because we need the money. And Judiciary, how that works together with the Health, I'm excited about that. And then we have some at-large members, but it will be people that we know who are interested in these issues. And I think you spend your time, if you're a good senator, over the summer learning about things, looking into things and coming back with solutions instead of just whining about things, so I'm excited that there could be some things happening. In this budget situation we're in, we're not through this yet by any means either, I do think we'll be back later. I'm not so sure our revenues are going to be sustaining. Going into next year, though, if you're in sales or anything in 2009, when you fill out your income taxes next year, it's not going to be so good. We're in June, getting into June, and everyone I talk to in any industry usually is not doing so well. So I think we still got to grind through next year. So what we put in this budget this year needs to be sustained and moved forward. I think there's things out there that we need to look on

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how we deliver services and kind of work together and then come and say what is the five-year solution here. You know, I'm a big one-, three-, and five-year outlook person. I think beyond that we're kidding ourselves as what can be done in 10, 15, 20 years. Maybe somebody is more visionary than I, but I think that committee will be excellent. Senator Campbell worked with Senator Dubas on that and I think that will make some input. So keep in contact with your contacts there, and we'll try to get that. When do you think Exec Board, Jeff, would...by when we leave, we'll know who's on that. []

JEFF SANTEMA: Yes, sir, I think so. Within six...the bill says within, I think, 30 days after the bill is signed. It has the emergency clause... []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. []

JEFF SANTEMA: ...so it should be fairly shorter. []

SENATOR GAY: But we got an idea who wants to be on that. I mean, let's face it. I will not be on that committee. I mean, I think Senator Campbell and Howard are probably the best for...just because there's so many things going on for...but it will be interesting. But I mean on the update, I'm not going to go over every minor thing in there. If there's things, like I say, it's not going to be pulled, held from Final Reading back. I can't imagine that. I think we move on and get it done. There was some input, I know, that got included in there. It's hard to pull that coalition together and please everyone. There were some recommendations that we did get in there. But if you didn't get something at this point, I think it's open to work on. Todd and Scot were both good to with and they understand that this committee is going to work with them and have some input. When we give dollars, though, we can't tell them exactly how to use it. We can give input. But I guess at that point, I have your commitment from both of you that you're excited to work with us and best (inaudible), like you always have been. But that's kind of the way I envision this, is whoever would be the Chair of that committee would work closely with you and I'd like to have them meet fairly regular, and I think they will, so. But at that

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point, is there any...this is discussion. I've talked on (inaudible). What are your all thoughts on there? At this point, like I say, it's a little bit done but the hot line needs to be in. All this is new pretty much except for the SCHIP, but all this is kind of new so if we can go around the table and get any input and discussion on this, open it up. []

SCOT ADAMS: I think I certainly was impressed by the collaborative nature of the variety of different points of view and interest. This is clearly a moment in Nebraska that arose out of a lot of emotion, a lot of energy, a lot of unusual circumstances, and the coming together of different points of view into this seemed to be a positive experience. I look forward to the pieces, especially around the hot line and the Family Navigator Program, to see what impact that might have on the overall situation and that kind of thing. Toward that end, I don't know if this is...if this is useful or not, but this is sort of something I have been thinking about, and I think of this as sort of a draft, if you will, of ways to think about (inaudible). It's an attempt to help me to organize the thinking around what we have seen with regard to the conversation, and because of my interest in behavioral health, that's a more narrow field than is the issue of troubled families overall, and that got me to thinking about all the different dynamics. I'm thinking about sort of focused interventions and things, and so some of the elements of LB603 that strike me are things that target particular segments of the overall system of Nebraska families. And I'm open to any feedback, whether or not others find this useful or not with regard to the conversation. And so, in any event, I offer that for feedback. But I think we're on the right track. I feel positively about it. []

BATH BAXTER: Scott, how do you...how do you see this rolling out? I mean obviously the...systemically, you know, the interface with child welfare, obviously the interface with community-based behavioral health services, how do you see the department rolling this out? []

SCOT ADAMS: Well, there are different elements with regard to all this. Certainly there's a portion that is specific to Children and Family Services with postguardian,

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postadoption services, and I think he's taking the lead with that. With the hot line and the Navigator, we're in process with the Department of Administrative Services to develop the bid package for that to be bid upon, hopefully in a relatively graphic fashion. We want to make sure that we're consistent with the oversight committee that Senator Gay mentioned earlier and so we don't want to get too far ahead of the pack but, on the other hand, we want to have something to react to. So we're working toward that goal, to have that bidding be conducted in such a fashion that we can be up and going by January 1 with the hot line and with the Navigator services, at least that's our target goal. I think the bids will tell us a little more as to the realistic nature of those expectations, but that's our hope at this point. Other elements, I know, will take different amounts of time. CMS has been slow, nearly a year, in responding to some other elements of the LB601 components involved in here. And so whether or not that's available by the December 1 time line or not, I suspect not, but that will track on its own course. So I think those are the things within our control. The money to the university, you know, is...will go, you know, according to that design, and I really have nothing to say about that. I don't have any hand on that one. []

BETH BAXTER: You know, this has been a collaborative process throughout the, you know, its course and that collaboration shouldn't end, you know, once the bill is passed. And I know, you know, we look at that at the legislative level and that there will be this, you know, oversight commission and that will continue, but it really has to happen at the community level as well to, you know, to collaborate and interface with what's already out in the community so that those things are tied together and what the providers do, what the regions do, what the family orgs do. I think it's just, you know, it's just beginning to see that collaboration. []

SENATOR GAY: Well, and that's, you know, when we have this group on the outset, it's...I assume that you guys would be paying attention to what they're doing at the meetings, public meetings. And you know, some of this, when I look at opportunities, if you're doing something well in a region, you know, I'm more of if you say I will give it up,

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you have to have the trust that all that cash isn't going away, that it can be...I've always been a big fan, if we take some money, get a pool, X amount of pool of money, I don't like taking things away without...if you're going to do something in collaboration, you shouldn't be penalized for doing that. And I've kind of...I think I get the understanding, from being new here, that it's always been that the department is like we're going to take and not ever give back. I think we need to make sure that we open up those lines of communication a little bit. And I told Todd this in his confirmation hearing, and the more I see of it, you heard, you know, a lot of times it's just we need to work on that trust factor back and forth. We aren't always going to agree on everything, that's for sure, and we have different roles to play here as legislators, providers, advocates, the department, but there has to be a little bit...I mean, we need to...I understand people protecting their turf and...but we...I guess I'm just saying on this money, it's getting harder to come by and if you give something up in agreement that we don't want to just take funds from you without saying, okay, here's what's coming back. And I know the hot lines, everyone running their different hot lines and all that, well, if you continue to run a hot line does that make sense? And this won't happen overnight but I think if you say, all right, I trust that your hot line is working, I don't need mine...or maybe I do. I don't know. But if I give that up, I shouldn't be penalized. I should get some...take some of those resources that I was using and redirect it to another program. So those are the kind of discussions, going to have to happen and they're not easy. Or, gee, you know, you do this program, doesn't make any sense. Well, maybe we should come up with a new idea. But I think our little silos is what has developed over 20-some years and maybe...in some way that's good. That's local. You know your needs, whether it's in Omaha or Scottsbluff or whatever. But another way, I don't think we could afford that everyone doing their own thing. So I don't know what the answer is. I think this group can help figure it out. []

BETH BAXTER: Well, I think the answer is that you allow it to roll out at the community level, you know, in terms of that, that collaboration, you know, at the state level, at the community level. Because it's at the community level where people know what

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resources are available, where the gaps are, you know, where the barriers that are for kids and families to get access to services. So I think that's where you take it, is down to the community level for people to figure out how to make it work. []

SENATOR GAY: Any other thoughts on the legislation or I guess the roll out is important timewise. Don't get too far ahead of the senators, I guess. []

SCOT ADAMS: Uh-huh. []

SENATOR GAY: I know how that works too. []

SCOT ADAMS: Right. []

SENATOR GAY: But there's a fine line between them. Just a little bit I'd like to hear and probably this is just as good a format as any, how do you guys work together? Todd, and I know you're not new but you're new in your director's position. Do you guys, like, speak weekly or monthly, daily? []

SCOT ADAMS: We have a meeting...we have a meeting today. []

SENATOR GAY: Do you see each other a day? How does this operation work? []

SCOT ADAMS: We have a meeting today at 1:00 to 2:00, typically once a week on Mondays, where all the directors get together and look blankly at one another. (Laughter) And so we try to continue that conversation on... []

CANDY KENNEDY: The blank (inaudible). (Laugh) []

SCOT ADAMS: Yeah, the blank (inaudible) On the times when some folks can't be there, they're caught up, you know, in some fashion, I think Vivianne is gone today and

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somebody else, but we try to go through, you know, an "agendaized" list. And on the time when there are just particular issues, we'll have particular meetings. There is a time coming up with Todd, Vivianne and I on a topic, for example. []

TODD RECKLING: Today. []

SCOT ADAMS: Yeah, this afternoon, that's right, later on. So I think...I think the hope of 296 that assigns sort of divisional accountability (inaudible) person with overall accountability for Health and Human Services but with communication going on between and among the divisions seems to be working out, I think, in an improved fashion from what was. We do talk regularly. []

SENATOR GAY: Okay. Well, this group is going to just make sure these five bills work and, like I say, the one that I guess is not a huge deal would be...it's a huge deal but like LB136, we already know that works, but these new programs, there has to be a time line and something done. I don't, you know, I think a year we should be touting some successes or sooner. But their focus is on this. Now I think that's the number one goal. If they come up with other ideas, I think they just will, because of the synergies of people (inaudible) are going to come up with some ideas. And I say, you know, draft legislation then and bring it, because that's how we do things here, so. []

SCOT ADAMS: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. []

SENATOR GAY: So I'm excited. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Two conversations that I've heard recently about the bills, one, it's been a great opportunity to talk to people that typically I haven't had conversations with to explain what Navigators are, because the terminology "Navigators," I hear, what does that mean? So it's been a great learning experience on a lot of different levels. This week I've gotten several calls concerned about the Work Force Development piece

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about just to be perfectly honest, the concern that because I'm on Medicaid means that I get a paraprofessional that works with me, and all the concerns that go with that. Because I don't have private health insurance, does that mean that I'm going to be...the skill level is going to be different or I'll be treated differently? So just... []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. I don't know. I can't answer that question. How do you answer that question? []

CANDY KENNEDY: Oh, I know, I can't either. I'm just sharing what the calls are. []

SENATOR GAY: He can. Well, these guys can. []

SCOT ADAMS: I'm not sure I understand the... []

CANDY KENNEDY: With the Work Force Development, I guess there's been some conversation about the... []

JEFF SANTEMA: With the provisional licensed mental health practitioner issue? []

CANDY KENNEDY: ...provisional, yes. Yes, exactly. []

SENATOR GAY: (Inaudible) license, yeah. []

JEFF SANTEMA: Not being reimbursed under Medicaid... []

CANDY KENNEDY: Right. []

JEFF SANTEMA: ...and not being part of the provider panel. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Yes. And I guess there was a letter from the... []

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JEFF SANTEMA: Magellan. []

CANDY KENNEDY: ...yeah, about that and there's...I've gotten a lot of calls about that.
[]

SENATOR GAY: Well, they're working with licensed right now. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Yes, but there is... []

SENATOR GAY: They're...it's the provisional, the way I understand it, is not being...that's what we're going to discuss with Senator Dubas and I and Vivianne at some point, why that decision was made. But right now there's...I understand there's enough licensed mental health professionals. []

CANDY KENNEDY: There isn't. And I like... []

SENATOR GAY: There isn't. Okay. Then we're not...then we're not communicating because...I guess what is enough then? So that's the discussion would be. []

CANDY KENNEDY: I think what kind of sparked it was a letter from the, like... []

SENATOR GAY: Psychological Association. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Yes. That's the one that's really got things pumping. Provisionals, I think that experience of provisionals is very, very important and so I'm not saying I'm personally saying one way or the other. I'm just expressing a lot of the calls I've gotten this week. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. I've heard the same thing. []

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RUTH HENRICHS: Was there a letter recently? []

CANDY KENNEDY: Yeah. []

RUTH HENRICHS: Like in the last few days? Because I've been gone, so. []

SENATOR GAY: About a week or two ago. []

CANDY KENNEDY: About a week, yeah. []

SENATOR GAY: Week ago. []

TOM McBRIDE: When we were first informed of that it was that Magellan had done a survey of providers within, and they had enough. They didn't have to rely on provisionals. And the feeling that the provisionals didn't have the supervision in community-based agencies unless they were accredited and had a... []

JEFF SANTEMA: Outside of the agency setting particularly. []

TOM McBRIDE: Yeah. And, you know, the fear is, is you've got a...I mean, we've got 11 licensed mental health practitioners in our program. I don't know how many Doane graduates every year for...you know, that would go into a program like that. We have areas of the state that certainly don't have enough licensed mental health practitioners in them. I would hope that maybe the LB603 part, you know, would help in that. But you can't, you know, if an agency...if LFS is not going to be paid for, you know, for a provisional that's doing, you know, community-based work, then this person that's, you know, going into the career and is looking at, you know, I'd really like to work in mental health but, you know, until I get those 3,000 hours, you know, I'm going to...my pay is going to be scaled back because of what they receive, and I can't afford to do that. I'm

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going to go into an MBA program or, you know, something like that; that we're really restricting a whole career, you know, development process. []

CANDY KENNEDY: I agree. []

SENATOR GAY: That bridge. There's a bridge between, yeah, whatever it is. []

CANDY KENNEDY: And I guess I was just making that comment more to make sure that we're...that the public and the families are informed exactly why and how that's working. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. And I've heard that, too, and actually where I was a little bit upset is I had that discussion a week ago with Senator Dubas, or maybe two, and we...absolutely this summer we need to look at it, and then it was kind of thrown into my lap. But, you know, that's a decision I suppose was made that should have been, you know, a decision was made six months ago or longer, I understand, and... []

TOM McBRIDE: It's been awhile. []

SENATOR GAY: It's been awhile. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Yeah. []

SENATOR GAY: And then all of a sudden, a week before implementation or whatever, people get a little crazy. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Uh-huh. []

SENATOR GAY: Those are things, I think a logical discussion, ongoing discussions help. But, yeah, there must be some kind of bridge. And I don't know what the numbers

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are or anything, but that's something where we're going to have a meeting and see. But I could see that kind of thing being one of these, as we go into the next thing, either a study here, interim, or this other group could do that as well. But I think those are things that need to be thought out a little more and everyone needs to understand the ramifications of a decision, and that probably wasn't the case here and now we're all screaming the world is going to end with the...but, you know, 3,000 hours, that's a lot to ask for somebody. []

CANDY KENNEDY: It is. []

SENATOR GAY: If you're not getting paid, is that volunteer time then or what are you doing? That's a lot of... []

TOM McBRIDE: Well, you know, and a lot of those people have... []

SENATOR GAY: It's a lot...that's a... []

TOM McBRIDE: ...career experience going into that. It's not like they're just... []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. Well, that's where Erin is right now. She's doing this process. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Exactly, yeah. []

SENATOR GAY: And she had to make some major decisions in her life. []

TOM McBRIDE: Well, that's who you have to, you know,... []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, I agree. []

TOM McBRIDE: ...in some of the outlying places, the provisionals are the ones that are

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going to be there. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. But that could be, you know, it should be looked at a little more than just a knee-jerk and some...the way things happen sometimes is that. But, see,... []

TOM McBRIDE: Now it does not... []

SENATOR GAY: ...I'd like to see the study that says we're covered then. []

RUTH HENRICHS: I would too. []

KATHY MOORE: Yeah, because there's... []

SENATOR GAY: Because... []

KATHY MOORE: Because there was another study a year prior that actually reflects very differently. So, yeah, I think that was an issue. Actually, I think the Behavioral Health Coalition has been challenging and requesting information. There's this other organization called the Nebraska Behavioral Health Coalition which is comprised of several of us serve or have a representative on that as well, and I think they are looking very, very carefully at the whole process for policy changes. When Magellan makes a change, it has not come under the same kind of public hearing process, public scrutiny, which is exactly how it... []

SENATOR GAY: But, yeah, but I don't think Magellan just can make a change without us telling them to do that. They don't just wake up some morning and make a change. They're a subcontractor for the... []

KATHY MOORE: Well,... []

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SENATOR GAY: We hope they don't. We need to look into it, but I'm pretty sure... []

KATHY MOORE: And that's what the... []

SENATOR GAY: ...that was the directive that was made and I think that was just policy decision. Now if you want to change that then you do it through legislation or something else, and we're not at that point at this...we're aware of the situation and we got to deal with it and move on, so. But, yeah, that will be one. Anyway, well, any last words on the legislation? I know, you know, it's one of those things where it's done, but if we don't, we can move on to interim studies. I know, Tom, you had some things that you sent and thank you for that. Interim studies, I'm going to close then agenda item 4 and go to 5, legislative interim studies. What's the...I guess, Tom, I'm going to turn this over to you. You sent this out. That's what I'm... []

TOM McBRIDE: Well, you know, the bullet points or some of them come out of, you know, the initial report that the task force, you know, you know, looked at, and I just...some of them I don't think had been, you know, addressed all the way through. I think the first one is just something that continually needs to be looked at, you know, to see where there might be, you know, gaps and, you know, how those can be, you know, filled. And it's not really even particularly a level of care but more of a...it could be level of care, it could be geographic, it could be, you know, how it fits into the development of, you know, the out-of-home reform, and, you know, just how everything fits together. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Cultures even. []

TOM McBRIDE: Pardon? []

CANDY KENNEDY: Gaps as far as cultures, what their needs are, how we're doing that. []

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TOM McBRIDE: Yeah. Or, you know, it's...I think sometimes if Beth has a gap for some, you know, a mental health service or a behavioral, you know, substance abuse service out in her area and if there's got to be a different rate associated with that because it's rural and getting people there then, you know, just those kinds of things. You know, I think they're all pretty much self-explanatory. The other four then I think...except, well, not the next to the last one. That's one the Behavioral Health Coalition that Kathy talked about, we've put forth a legislative bill every year to, you know, try to address that, and I think you've had some...Senator Gay has had some thoughts on that. But certainly the substance abuse at YRTC, you know, being...using those at Hastings and the data enhancements were ones that came out of that initial task force recommendations. I don't know, that was my thoughts, so. []

SENATOR GAY: Oh, those are good. Didn't receive any others. []

CANDY KENNEDY: I have one in my mind. Does that count? (Laugh) []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, that counts, absolutely. That's how most the things... []

CANDY KENNEDY: It's been a long weekend, so forgive me. But one of my biggest questions has been for awhile, and we've had conversations about this, is since we're doing this...I'll use the pyramid again, the transitioning of the pyramid, so I'm having difficulty seeing how, as with the pyramid, we're talking about youth being at home and not, you know, the high-end services not being needed. How is an interim study to see how that funding mechanism is working, how are we getting that money from this back to this into the up-front services? And I'm kind of...I have a lot of difficulty seeing where that's all happening, because I know the...and the big picture thought was, you know, the money that we were saving here was going to go here. And so we're talking about two divisions, different funding sources, and I would really...that would be so very helpful to have that study so we could understand all of that and if there is some things that we need to do to change things. []

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BETH BAXTER: Well, it's a reinvestment strategy. You know, as you serve, you know, as you...because of a different service delivery, a way of, you know, cost savings in your mechanism of serving kids and families. Then you reinvest those dollars into the system so that, just as Candy said, you know, you can start working with kids and families more up front. So the funds are diverted to roads. They stay. They're reinvested within the system to improve it. []

SENATOR GAY: And, yeah, and you know I asked that question, too, in a public hearing one time and they aren't reinvested. They...not because of what Scot and Todd don't want to. []

CANDY KENNEDY: I'm sure it is. (Laugh) []

SENATOR GAY: If you're going to do this, though some of it is, if you are going to find savings you have to take it, and correct me if I'm wrong but this is what I've heard, if I could go save \$10 million in a program does not mean that that savings is going into another program unless I specifically direct the savings from this program will go to program B or C. []

KATHY MOORE: Right. []

BETH BAXTER: Right. []

SENATOR GAY: Otherwise, it goes into the General Fund. []

RUTH HENRICHS: But that was what was directed at the closing of Norfolk. []

KATHY MOORE: Right. []

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SENATOR GAY: And it was in the bill. What I'm saying, if I could go find him \$100,000 in savings buying pencils from somewhere else, I need to say exactly that that \$100,000 needs to go into... []

BETH BAXTER: It's articulated. []

SENATOR GAY: It's articulated or we help this guy out. But we (inaudible) we spend more than we...you know. []

CANDY KENNEDY: So... []

SENATOR GAY: But is that true, Lavon? I mean we pretty much have to specify where it goes. []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: If there's savings, it goes in the deficit bill. Isn't that correct? And then it goes...lapses back into the General Fund. []

SENATOR GAY: So you need to be aware of that. []

KATHY MOORE: And that's why LB542 in its original version, not the version that passed, did state it that way. It specifically identified savings from Hastings that would go into behavioral health. So I think Candy's question is an important question and I'm wondering, even if we know the answer, if there is a way to word a resolution that looks at...that poses the question and says how do we insure that the savings from serving children and families in a more...I don't want to use...in an interim we wouldn't use family friendly but at a more community-based, in-home level, how can or what should occur to make sure that those dollars are reinvested, as Beth is...I'm wondering if that just wouldn't be a discussion that could occur. []

SENATOR GAY: It's a discussion that occurs a lot but we just don't...I don't know,

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where would you say you're in this...they're just starting that process knowing where the savings is, it needs to be successful. []

SCOT ADAMS: Well, you know, my point of view, it's a great question, deserving of some study. You know, literally within minutes of this conversation, earlier we were talking about the expansion of \$16 million in a down economy. Isn't that a reinvestment of the savings that have gone on, in a sense? []

SENATOR GAY: Well, that's a reinvestment of General Funds. []

SCOT ADAMS: I mean, at what point... []

SENATOR GAY: And we took it from General Funds. []

SCOT ADAMS: Right. []

SENATOR GAY: What we're saying is if you're in a loop and you're saving...let's say you could go save \$20 million by doing something different,... []

_____: Right. []

SENATOR GAY: ...you could keep it in your department. It doesn't work that way. You need to... []

SCOT ADAMS: Doesn't work that way. That's right. []

SENATOR GAY: No, but it would help you and Todd and everyone else. You got X amount of money that we spend on let's say children and family services. It gets, you know...but if you kept it at that price or higher, what we're saying, we don't want it seeping out one end and coming in another and then you got a hole down here that it

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keeps trickling out of, of the savings, and then we'd break up five years, ten years from now, it's the same amount of money. You can save it through efficiencies or more dollars. And what we're saying, if you don't work together a little bit to get the efficiencies or something like that, you need to trust that if you're going to create an efficiency you're going to get some of that money back, and I don't think that exists,... []

KATHY MOORE: Right. []

SENATOR GAY: ...not because of anyone in this room. It's because of the way the system is set up. At some point, people need to start... []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: It's not a savings, though, unless the General Fund sees it. It's just a redirection of the money. []

SENATOR GAY: But if we could...yeah, but if we could get more done at a...we're never going to go like this. If we could get more done at a 3-4 percent level and reinvest and be much more efficient and smarter about things, it's what we're saying. They're just afraid that it's a flat level or something and over the years it doesn't...but I mean... []

CANDY KENNEDY: Well, and I know this is so simplistic, and I understand it's a very complicated process, but with LB542 and the whole philosophy and all the work that everyone is doing now and has been was this, I'll use the pyramid again, we're flipping this pyramid and the whole intention...the whole intent was and the money that we were saving from not having the high-end services, less than 6,500 in our high-end services down here, that we would...so we could put that energy, the funding, in this so we could prevent that, to keep that going, the work going. And if that's not happening then how are...we can't change that. The numbers will start going up again. []

SENATOR GAY: Well, depending if you get the savings. Ultimately, it's service delivery. Is the end recipient getting a better service and changing their life? Obviously, the

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savings, we all want that first, so sometimes we look at dollars, dollars, dollars, I think, but if we could do that. But part of that part is we're relying on others to be our partner as a state. []

CATHY KENNEDY: Absolutely. []

SENATOR GAY: We're contracting things out and relying on you to be a partner. We need to be a good partner as well. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Right. []

SENATOR GAY: And I don't think...this partnership right now, I'm a little worried because they don't trust each other at some point. And I don't mean that mean. It's just the way we're set up. We need to...that's why I'd like to meet a little more and talk a little more. []

CANDY KENNEDY: It's not set up to be successful and a good collaboration, a comfortable collaboration. How's that? []

SENATOR GAY: It's set up, it's just we need to keep working on it. There's two different, you know, they're pulling sides but sometimes that's okay. That's how you keep things in check. But as long as we, you know, get to that point where, okay, I understand your side of the story and I understand your side of the story. That's hard, that's...especially with hundreds of providers and, you know, so. []

KATHY MOORE: Well, you know, it seems like Candy's suggestion raises maybe two separate perspectives that could be looked at, and one is just looking within Program 365. Am I...do I have the program number right for child welfare, Todd? Is it Program 365? Is that child welfare? []

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SCOT ADAMS: And 365 is the regional centers. []

RUTH HENRICHS: Three what? []

KATHY MOORE: Program 365 is regions. []

BETH BAXTER: Regional centers. []

SCOT MOORE: Regional Centers. []

RUTH HENRICHS: Say it again? []

KATHY MOORE: Oh, okay, then what is child welfare? Three... []

TODD RECKLING: Program 347. []

KATHY MOORE: ...forty-seven. Thank you. Looking...Candy's point in terms of the pyramid is really looking at our dollars moving from out-of-home down to in-home within that program number, and so that might be one question. The second question that I think you're alluding to in terms of the money seeping out is when this bill passed, it passed viewing the \$16 million as new money, and I think that's the point that you're making in terms of dollars saved. []

SENATOR GAY: And it is new money. []

KATHY MOORE: It is new money. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, every bit of this is \$30 million new money. []

KATHY MOORE: Right. But that's in part because of the fact that historically we don't

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usually say we're going to save money in this program and we're going to invest it in this program. So every idea that's brought forward, even if it should be flowing from an efficiency or a program improvement, it's viewed as new money and kind of sold as new money. That's my point, that we don't... []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. I get that. Yeah. []

KATHY MOORE: ...even if money is lapsed back into General Fund, we don't see that connection between where it was saved and where it should be going perhaps, so... []

RUTH HENRICHS: Right. A good example of that is being told that, well, if once we close the regional centers and we get people into community-based services, then that money will come down and then there will be money for rate increases and there will be money because we'll have all this money coming back to the community. Well, there weren't rate increases because all that money never did come back to us. And so... []

SENATOR GAY: Well, but, you know, I don't know about that. That's where... []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: That money did flow through. It had to flow through. That was a...I mean it wasn't known as a savings, but just a...who was going to take care of the people, redirections of the services in who was going to pay. But the money did follow. There's just no doubt about that. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Well, and too, along with what you were saying, Senator Gay, so if Todd is doing this work and he is creating these programs and, you know, we're going to keep these kids out of high-end services and this is, you know, the work that he's doing, he's going to do this cost savings and, to me, I appreciate the cost savings but, you know, we're saving families and kids. So he does all this work and does this. So what's the reward, I'm sorry for the word "reward," but what...so what we're saying to Todd is so what? Do you see what I'm saying? []

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BETH BAXTER: Oh, I think you have to look at the priority. I mean child welfare reform... []

CANDY KENNEDY: Scot, so what? (Laugh) []

BETH BAXTER: ...child welfare reform ought to work if you look at it in terms of, because it's broadened the scope for not...I mean the department has always, you know, been able to serve families on a voluntary basis, but we saw that get smaller and smaller and smaller. So the Division of Children and Family Services, I mean they said we will have court-involved families and we'll have noncourt involved. So if it works, then we'll see the number of noncourt-involved families increase and the number of court-involved families decrease. So as long as the department, the Governor, you know, continues with that commitment to that philosophy, it should work, you know, that... []

SENATOR GAY: Well, is that the best thing to do? []

BETH BAXTER: Absolutely. []

SENATOR GAY: Okay. So I think we're all in agreement on these things. The difference though is like sometimes there's just a communication gap that you all think that money didn't flow, and I know it did as well, and you know maybe that's the thing, we show where it went. Now if you... []

CANDY KENNEDY: That's...yes. (Laugh) []

SENATOR GAY: ...if you think it went in the wrong area, that's a policy decision that we need to talk about and change, and that's a little harder obviously. But I do think that money has flowed. []

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CANDY KENNEDY: But at least it's a conversation we could have then if we understood. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, oh, absolutely, or why is it not getting to where I wanted it to go,... []

CANDY KENNEDY: Yeah. []

SENATOR GAY: ...is the conversation probably. So that, you know, we can get information on that, but that's more if you have regular... []

CANDY KENNEDY: I know it's Senator Heidemann's fault. (Laugh) []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. No, I mean... []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: It always is, trust me. (Laugh) []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, he's used to it, but... []

SCOT ADAMS: We do our best to get in the way (inaudible). []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. Well...yeah. []

KATHY MOORE: I have...go ahead. []

SENATOR GAY: Go ahead. []

KATHY MOORE: I really appreciate Tom laying it out. I have a couple of editorial suggestions for his. Are... []

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SENATOR GAY: On these five? []

KATHY MOORE: Yeah. Uh-huh. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, we won't be able to do all five,... []

KATHY MOORE: Great. []

SENATOR GAY: ...I'll guarantee you, but... []

TOM McBRIDE: Awe... []

SENATOR GAY: Sorry, Tom. (Laughter) []

KATHY MOORE: Well, what I'm thinking is that there should be one where he's got identification of gaps, and there was discussion about geography. Voices for Children in our Kids Count report last year, our commentary is titled "Race, Poverty, and Geography Matter," and we've been having a lot of conversations around the state using that, and I think that might, if there could be a resolution that just talks about gaps based on race, geography and poverty, Candy used the word "culture," you could certainly...race and culture are sometimes interchangeable, sometimes very different. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Or different, yes. []

KATHY MOORE: Exactly. So I would really support one resolution that looks at gaps, barriers, and challenges, because with the hot line and Navigators not starting until January of 2010, we won't really have any evaluation from those until 2011 or 2012. And so it seems as though we need to find a way for the oversight committee to get information and maybe an interim study would be the opportunity for that. []

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SENATOR GAY: Well, and I think that's kind of on that one, they're going to look into some of these things, I would assume. We need to ask them to do something over the summer too. That would be one where I think this is common. If you're looking at this whole thing,... []

KATHY MOORE: Right. []

SENATOR GAY: ...they would do this. I don't know that for sure. And number 5 looks like what we should be doing anyway. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Uh-huh. []

SENATOR GAY: If you have a task force, I would think you would be asking why are we not doing this. So on five, on progress, I think that's something we should just do during a regular meeting. I don't know if we need a...one is where I'd like that other group, and you can help them, that's what I assume they're going to find. If, gee, oh, we don't do that, or why do we do, why are six people doing the same thing, I think they're going to find this out over the summer if they really dig into things. So I'm a little...on that one. The YRTC thing, I am interested in that. I mean I know what's going on there. We've been asked to go tour that. And service rates, but I guess on those, which...if we had to prioritize them, we could do any one you want but I need to...you need to pick one. []

KATHY MOORE: Well, maybe I'm confused. Who...whatever gets introduced, you're saying that you think number 1 belongs to the oversight committee. []

SENATOR GAY: Could. I'm just saying in my head... []

KATHY MOORE: But the oversight committee doesn't exist. So how... []

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SENATOR GAY: It exists, in 30 days after we adjourn... []

KATHY MOORE: Right. But... []

SENATOR GAY: ...for two years. []

KATHY MOORE: Right. But who should introduce a resolution that might flow... []

SENATOR GAY: Well, what I'm saying, lots of times you can do things without a resolution, I mean just by doing it. The resolution is more you're using staff time to dig up numbers and actually dig into something fairly substantial. That is 1,000 different things probably. So I don't know if a resolution could narrow it down quite to that. I think that's an ongoing thing. That's why I don't...identification, that's...I think there's a lot out there. I don't know. But maybe, I mean, we could do that one too. The Kearney one, YRTC is...will be looked into anyway. I don't know if you guys want to do that. That will be looked into by myself and others on the Kearney thing so I wouldn't suggest that one. []

BETH BAXTER: Tom, could you explain just a little bit more bullet item number 3, the service coordination, Behavioral Health and what are your thoughts there? []

TOM McBRIDE: Well, you know, I think that, you know, even in our desire to create a seamless system and where everybody knows, you know, where somebody sits within that system, there are still things out there where, you know, where we do have some disconnect. You know, with the in-home services, you know, with that reform, now going to the out-of-home, you know, reform, is all of this still under the purview of Children and Family Services? How does Behavioral Health, you know, connect into that? And then even if you have, you know, those two divisions, you know, putting their arms around everybody and, you know, we've got a good plan worked out there, you know, how does the judicial system, you know, work in there? Because that's, you know, currently, in

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working with, you know, with children, sometimes the judicial system is the wildcard in the whole thing; that we can all be going down a road like this but a judge says, no,... []

BETH BAXTER: Absolutely. []

TOM McBRIDE: ...you know, that youngster is, you know, not doing this or they're doing this. And you know I think sometimes we, you know, we start to...you know, we don't know where everybody interconnects and, you know, we butt heads. []

CANDY KENNEDY: And we do make assumptions that, oh, that's for that, or that's that, but it's pretty gray. []

TOM McBRIDE: This came from my little mind. (Laugh) []

BETH BAXTER: No, it's great. We're just in awe. So it's integration, right? I mean it's a good, old-fashioned system of care on a systemic level and that integration, because the common denominator here are kids, and it's really what this committee came together about, because the common denominator was children and children's behavioral health, you know, their behavioral health needs. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Good job, Tom. (Laugh) []

TOM McBRIDE: Well, you know, I think as a, you know, as a provider, as a citizen, as a parent on how the different departments would hook together, there just, you know, needs to be some clarity sometimes. []

BETH BAXTER: Just a comment, a history lesson here. Looking at bullet item number 1, we used to do a 433 report. It was...the regions. It was a legislative mandate and it really was looking at gaps and barriers and system needs. And so we did this little strategic planning on an annual basis and it really became...was kind of the blueprint.

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You know, given the...maybe the limited resources there were out in the community, behavioral healthcare, we just kept, you know, plugging away, identifying. And it really at times had this way of unifying the system because in behavioral health we could pay for startup costs for a...I mean that's how we got intensive family preservation, that's how we got really agency supported foster care--we called it therapeutic foster care initially, how we got some of our, you know, school-based day treatment programs for kids. And we really have this collaborative process. The regions, through the department, we could pay for startup and then there were other mechanisms to help sustain those services. []

TOM McBRIDE: You don't do those any longer? []

BETH BAXTER: Well, it was repealed in LB1083. It was one of those. We still look at it, you know, some strategic planning. []

CANDY KENNEDY: So how long have you not done this? []

BETH BAXTER: Well, LB1083. []

SCOT ADAMS: Five years in July. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Five years. []

BETH BAXTER: So we just got busy doing other stuff, you know? But it was a...it was really a good mechanism. []

CANDY KENNEDY: I'd like to see what it looks like. Do you have any old reports?
(Laugh) Uh-oh. []

SENATOR GAY: Well, oh, that's all right. So I guess on the Kearney one is basically I

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don't want to do because I'm doing that on my own. []

TOM McBRIDE: I'm sorry? []

SENATOR GAY: The Kearney situation, I'm doing that on my own. I'm looking into that already with the Beatrice thing and just...we're looking into that, so that would be a waste of your time. []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: How did you tie that into Beatrice? []

SENATOR GAY: Huh? []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: How did you tie that into Beatrice? []

SENATOR GAY: Because they think there's money going from there to Beatrice, that the psychiatrists are going back and forth and...I don't think there is but we're going to look into it. That's...I don't think there is. []

KATHY MOORE: And so who's looking at that, when you say "we"? []

SENATOR GAY: Health and Human Services Committee. []

KATHY MOORE: Health and Human Services Committee? Okay. []

SENATOR GAY: Uh-huh. Yeah, just to see where the money goes out there and why. I've heard for two years now about it and we're just going to look into it this summer and tour it and have some discussions on that. The rate review, those rate reviews, you know, is there...are you guys doing one? []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: We're doing one, right, Liz? []

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SENATOR GAY: They're already doing one? []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: A rate review? We did...didn't we put \$150,000 in? []

_____ : DD. []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Just DD? []

SENATOR GAY: Just DD services. []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Oh, I thought it was a more general one. []

SENATOR GAY: On that appropriations \$150,000, is it just DD only? []

_____ : That's just...that's looking at Beatrice. []

SENATOR GAY: Well, community-based. []

TODD RECKLING: It's just DD. []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: It is just DD? Okay. []

TOM McBRIDE: That came out of...oh, I don't know many years now we've put forth a bill with, you know, with the rate advisory committee and done everything from let's tie it to the Consumer Price Index to, you know, you know, different things, and it came back this year, I think was it LB519? []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. []

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TOM McBRIDE: Okay. And, you know, that's something that we would like to be able to, you know, work with the department, with the Legislature, you know, to manage rather than react to, I guess is the whole feeling on that. []

SENATOR GAY: Well, you could combine it with the savings from...is there going to be savings from the transitions you guys are doing? I mean, you could look at some of that and say how does it flow to the rates. Is any of the savings going to the rates? You know what I mean. When you're doing your out-of-home placement and you're changing the pyramid the other way, does the savings go in to reflect...how does it reflect the rates? Do you have anything like that? []

TOM McBRIDE: That could be part of it, but I think that we're drawing an assumption that when we turn that triangle upsidedown that we're going to save money. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Yeah, that's... []

TODD RECKLING: That's what Beth was mentioning earlier, Senator, is as you're shifting that, some of that, what we've been trying to say, would go to serve those families in a noncourt-involved case. So it's not necessarily a savings. It's a shift in trying to hit that front door earlier. []

KATHY MOORE: And when Candy originally was talking what I think she was saying is we want to see those dollars. It isn't even a matter of us asserting how that shift should occur. It's...and maybe that even goes back to Ruth's statement earlier about LB1083 and the monies. Part of the problem is that we don't see it. It may have existed and I know that a lot of the providers who were directly involved in the LB1083 shift had to go to great lengths to find it or to see it or to finally have it occur. It was delayed. So I think it's partly a matter of transparency or understanding just how a budget works. If the rest of us are annually putting together a financial report, we just want to see a financial report that is programmatically defined. []

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CANDY KENNEDY: Well, simply because if we're asking, Scot, we want these, you know, front-end services, we want this done throughout the state, and Scot is going, yes, that sounds great, I have no money to do that, and we're telling Todd, keep those kids in that lower-end services, it's like a pot that... []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. []

CANDY KENNEDY: ...they're trying to keep the lid on but they're trying to do what they can. But if we're not, you know, keeping that flow going so that can happen, then we're just setting everybody up. And like you said, Senator Gay, as well, how are we...what is the trust in the reward when things are going right and they're doing things...you know, when the process is working? []

SENATOR GAY: Well, what we could do is... []

CANDY KENNEDY: We take them money away? That's bad. (Laugh) []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. What we could do is have you all stay here when...amongst yourselves and Jeff, and I don't have a big problem with this. We need this done by this week. It doesn't take that much to draft them. But on 2, we're going to look into anyway, okay, so I wouldn't suggest that. On 5, I think it's something this committee should be doing anyway. That's why you meet. Just need to meet a little more regularly because you already have a report and we issue all these reports and no one ever follows up on them. So 5 I think is just during the course of regular meetings. If those other three, you want to pick one or...and possibly two and be more specific, work with Jeff right now. You've got time, don't you, and stay a little while? []

JEFF SANTEMA: Yes, sir. []

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SENATOR GAY: And come with some little more specific recommendations. Pick two people who want to work with us on that. This would be pretty much Health Committee related. I don't want to get you tied up into anything, that you're already in two or three different things. I'd do up to two probably. We need to keep them where...realistic. I mean if you get 30 things we need to look into, that's not going to be that helpful, but be a little more specific on these things. So, you know, like I say, the...I'll look at the rates. You know what, you were there on that rate bill. I think to just set rates and say here's what they should be, well, that doesn't do...it doesn't hurt but in a little bit you need to bring that to us and say here's what other states are doing. I haven't seen that much done, where somebody comes with a spreadsheet. []

TOM McBRIDE: Yeah, and, you know, we can do that. I mean I don't think, you know, certainly if you save money there ought to be some incentives and stuff, but you can't rely on saving money for providers to stay in business. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. And maybe that's a good lesson too. []

TOM McBRIDE: I mean it can't be rate increases tied to saving money. That's just not going to...not going to get it. But... []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, the pressure to cut service to save bucks so I can pay myself more. []

TOM McBRIDE: Sure. No, that... []

KATHY MOORE: Would it make sense, if we prioritize the dollar issue, would it make sense for it to be both Health and Human Services and Appropriations though, so that the budget, the finance side of it, is included? Would that? []

CANDY KENNEDY: Would that make it more understandable so we... []

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KATHY MOORE: Well, I think that's part of why this task force was set up the way it was with the two cochairs, so I hate to lose sight of the benefit of having committee members from both committees involved. It just seems like that's part of the... []

SENATOR GAY: Well, a little bit where we're at on that, though, is we've got healthcare reform; where you're on, we've got this nine-member committee, which you've got two members on. We've got our committee members spread across three different interim studies that we're doing jointly that are fairly large. And that's why I'm saying a little bit that those nine committee members of that, one, two, two from Appropriations, two from Health; we have the insurance one which is three from Appropriations, three from Health, healthcare reform. []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: I want to be involved in the Health Care Cash Fund one for sure. []

SENATOR GAY: Health Care Cash Fund, we're looking at prioritizing that, so that's joint. We're already doing three together so if you choose that one... []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: We could get...John Harms understands this stuff pretty good. I mean we could get some other members maybe, if they're not already busy. []

SENATOR GAY: Well, and we don't always have to have these huge meetings. We could just have somebody here to do this. []

KATHY MOORE: Right. But Senator Harms, you're right, has a very good perspective. []

SENATOR GAY: It's the resources of our offices we don't want to stretch too thin. []

KATHY MOORE: Right. []

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SENATOR GAY: I'm saying if we got to...I'm open for it. I mean I'm going to do...it's just those rates. When you keep looking at those rates and you say, here's what you should be paid, and then, you know, we discuss this in committee, fine, but... []

TOM McBRIDE: What if I swear to it? []

SENATOR GAY: ...but, you know, there's a little bit of a cost. Have you guys ever formed a coalition amongst yourselves and had a...I hate to have you waste your money but if it's that important, why don't you...have you ever had an accounting firm put together a package and say here's where we're at? []

BETH BAXTER: Yes. Yes, absolutely. []

CANDY KENNEDY: Yes. []

SENATOR GAY: Well,...you have? []

TOM McBRIDE: On both sides of the continuum. []

SENATOR GAY: Okay. How long ago? []

TOM McBRIDE: Started probably, what, 15 years ago with (inaudible) Council study? []

RUTH HENRICHS: Yeah. []

SENATOR GAY: Well, when is the last time you had it updated? []

TOM McBRIDE: Probably two. []

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RUTH HENRICHS: Two. []

SENATOR GAY: Well, I mean, do you need a study if you got one just two years old? Why don't we just talk about that one more? []

RUTH HENRICHS: I really do think that the reason that CAFCON and NABHO and all the providers bring it is because every year we come with a rate increase because we're still behind the eight ball. So we've looked at all kinds of different ways to manage rates so that we don't spend all our time every year on that issue, so. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. Well, I don't mind looking into it. It's like I'm only... []

RUTH HENRICHS: That would be great. []

SENATOR GAY: ...in my third year here and I'm an old hand, I mean, so that's...it is what it is. Chairman of a committee and I didn't even know you did that two years ago, so why don't we just go over what you got? []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Liz has got something. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. Let's don't reinvent that wheel but we could discuss that during a meeting as well. []

RUTH HENRICHS: Yeah. That's great. []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Liz. []

LIZ HRUSKA: The state paid for a rate study two years ago (inaudible) Johnson and really it was never looked at. []

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KATHY MOORE: Yeah, that's the point. []

SENATOR GAY: Well, then if...then we're halfway there. Maybe that's what we need to do. []

KATHY MOORE: Yeah. I mean the providers have worked, I think, as collaboratively as they possibly could on this topic, so I think you hit the nail. It just hasn't somehow gotten attention, focus. []

TOM McBRIDE: We certainly appreciate the Legislature, you know, what you've been able to do, I mean because otherwise we would have had...we went seven years one time with no increase, and it would have been several. So we appreciate what you... []

SENATOR GAY: Well, if we already have the study done maybe it wouldn't be that hard to look into it then. Well, why would you all...do you got anything else or do you want to... []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Sometimes you can study that and you can tell us all you want to how much it takes for you to operate and you get to years like the year we're having this year and there's not a whole lot we can do because we've only got so much money to spread around. And then you fall behind. []

SENATOR GAY: Although, on one thing, I'm just going to give you a shot across the bow a little bit, you know, we're looking...one of the Health and Human Services study is to look at every thing that he does and he does, mainly these two and others, but to have them prioritize what exactly is your number 1 priority, what is number 1,001. Because maybe down here in the 900s to 1000s, all these programs we've created over 20-30 years maybe aren't needed. And I know next year when I have a bill in to get rid of something, that you all won't like it. But maybe if we talk about in the summer we can all agree that, you know what, these programs that existed 10-15 years ago no longer

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are good and we can save some money and we reinvest that money into a rate study we have. Those are the kind of things that we're looking for. So we're already doing that study. So maybe that's something, if we understand the finance study, but I do believe...
[]

TOM McBRIDE: And I think it can...you know, it can move into other legislation too. I think that, you know, the support of mental health parity, you know, is going to help,... []

SENATOR GAY: Oh, exactly. We didn't discuss that and that is a big one. []

TOM McBRIDE: ...you know, some other things. So, you know, there's different things that are going to come into play with that. []

SENATOR GAY: But we are going to look into that on healthcare reform, by the way, so that's already... []

TOM McBRIDE: The parity? []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, because we got Banking, Insurance, and Appropriations all converging into a big healthcare reform. []

TOM McBRIDE: I can give you some input on that because we... []

SENATOR GAY: I'm sure we'll get some on that one. (Laughter) []

TOM McBRIDE: ...we did full mental health parity in our insurance policy. []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. Yeah, I know, I'm sure that one will be big. So, well, why don't you decide one or two here and then work with Jeff. I'll talk to him later today and we'll start working on it. Do you want to be then on the rate thing? I mean there shouldn't be

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much... []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: How about Harms or somebody? []

SENATOR GAY: You'd have to appoint somebody? []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Yeah. []

SENATOR GAY: All right. []

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: That's a possibility. []

SENATOR GAY: All right. []

TODD RECKLING: And just real quick, Tom, on the third part, there's some...I just met with the courts this morning. There's going to be some nationally occurring opportunities over the next few months to also address court issues of the child welfare (inaudible) care reform, so there may be some occurrences despite an interim study to have those discussions and talk about that. []

TOM McBRIDE: That would be great. []

SENATOR GAY: All right. So why don't you get something a little more specific and just informally. We'll adjourn this. []

BETH BAXTER: Do we have another meeting set or...? []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, let's get one. Where are we at in June? Probably...what is today, May 11, so, yeah, let's do something late June. If we can get these done, you know, the interim study thing, I'd like, Jeff, it's hard to work with seven people. Why don't

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you pick two of you that want to work with him amongst yourselves. Because the wording of these things, we can make them very broad or narrower. He'll know what to do. I don't know which is better. Sometimes broad is too broad and too narrow. So let's get those done. And I guess Tom will work off your thing and you can figure what you want. Probably do two of them. And remember those other nine senators are going to be doing something all summer, too, so I'm sure you'll be involved in there. I just don't want 100 studies going on. If they're going to do it, why should we do it? So...but they aren't formed yet either so. And then the task force stuff is there. That could be a whole meeting agenda. I think it should be a meeting agenda. Maybe we could do that even in June, is discuss what on the recommendations, what has been implemented and what hasn't. That could be a good June meeting, by the way, just that alone, so...all right. And then we'll just let them work on it. []

JEFF SANTEMA: And so, Senator, you're ready to adjourn then? []

SENATOR GAY: Yeah, so we'll adjourn and then...if that's okay, and then you guys hang out and figure it out. All right. And we need that in by Friday actually, so. []

SCOT ADAMS: Drive safe on your way home. []

SENATOR GAY: All right. Thanks. []

RUTH HENRICHS: Thank you. []

SCOT ADAMS: Thank you. []