

SENATOR FOWLER: I appreciate the question. I was brought down early this morning, didn't have time to shave. I went home and shaved this noon in anticipation of that question. What was requested, and I might just reiterate again, was to add, to the medium-minimum security units in Lincoln, to add a chemical dependency unit, to add funds in Omaha for the construction because of some problems with the subsoil surface, I guess, in construction. Then to start, I think it was, construction of the medium-minimum security facility, 2.2 million. What the committee did was not allow the funds for the chemical dependency...construction at Lincoln reformatory for an additional unit for chemical dependency. It did allow additional money for the Omaha facility, but put them in the third year of construction rather than the first. So it's not money that is spent this year, and did appropriate \$500 thousand this year. There is a reappropriation of I think a little over \$1 million for the following fiscal year to begin construction of the maximum security unit of at least 120 units of housing. As to the question of what is delayed, I guess it's a question of who is responsible for delays in this as well. I have amendments to 546, the reappropriation bill in capital construction, that would designate, at each of the new reformatories, one of the units to be chemical dependency. The question, as I understand it, is it's not necessary to add an additional unit, or looking at the design, the unit that they're adding is really no different than one of the existing housing pods. Therefore we could designate one of the existing housing pods as a chemical dependency unit and meet that need. I have an amendment that would, in the reappropriation bills, designate at both of the institutions, an existing housing pod. They could come back to the Appropriations Committee if they feel the population pressure is still there, and request additional housing for inmates. This would make one of the units a chemical dependency unit at each of them. I think it was in 1975 that this Legislature put money in for a program statement for chemical dependency units, either to be attached to or be separate from one of the existing institutions. My understanding is that only \$22 of the \$25,000 has been spent on that program statement. Myself, one of the reasons I'm reluctant to grant the Department of Corrections the full \$40 million worth of construction that they want authorization for is that sort of thing. The delay on development of plans for programs before they undertake the construction. I guess the other thing the Appropriations Committee has done is said on the maximum security unit we are giving you part of what you ask for. We're giving you housing units, 120 housing units, actually the third phase of their plans. You will have to come back and ask for additional pieces of the project. We're not, this year in part because of revenue but more importantly I think because of a question of confidence, we're not going to give you full authorization to proceed on the maximum security unit. I'm greatly concerned about the housing conditions that exist at the Penitentiary. The facility is in my district. I've visited it many times. I have a brother who teaches out at the Penitentiary. I know that there are great problems in terms of the physical structure there. Based on the previous performance of the Department of Corrections I'm not comfortable in giving them full authorization to proceed with the maximum security unit in Lincoln. Therefore, we are giving them a piece of what they ask for. I would like to see, myself, construction begin on just one of the projects that we've authorized them to do. Then maybe I would have a little more confidence in the Department of Corrections. I don't