

February 7, 1980

LB 628

CLERK: I have nothing further on the bill, Mr. President.

SPEAKER MARVEL: The Chair recognizes Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature, if I have that much trouble getting the Legislature to accept correction of a typographical amendment or error, I may have a little difficulty here, but in reality, this bill did grow out of a legislative study based on a resolution that I had offered because there have been problems relative to the sheriffs department. The problems center around a low salary, a per diem for prisoners which has been converted into a bounty system whereby certain sheriffs supplement their income. That is done by putting somebody in jail just before eleven o'clock one night, keeping the individual overnight, then releasing him or her, charging for two days board without any meal actually having been served. This is questionable but it is not illegal. At this point, even the sheriffs are tired of having to do this. Those who are seeking a greater degree of professionalization have been seeking around trying to find a way to get out from under it. So this bill is an attempt to reach an accord on a number of issues that relate to the sheriffs office. With pushing, pulling, quarreling, disagreeing between myself and some of the sheriffs, we finally came up with this bill. There are parts of it which probably either group would like to see deleted from the bill but we agreed that it would be taken as a package to cover the waterfront and now I will tell you what all it does. In 1983, the salary schedule which you can find in the handout that was given to you this morning would take effect. It cannot take effect before 1983 because no elected official can have his or her salary changed during a term of office. That is when the next election would occur. Between now and 1983, the sheriffs still must feed prisoners. Rather than increase the bounty which I am dead set against and they know it, we dealt with the jailer's fee. The jailer's fee currently allows \$3 per day regardless of the number of prisoners provided one is in jail. If you want to call it a compromise was struck at this point, that fee would be raised from \$3 a day to \$10 a day. It is not \$10 per day per prisoner but \$10 a day regardless of the number of prisoners so there is no incentive built in to go out and arrest people in order to increase the jailer's fee. The purpose of that fee is to give the temporary relief between now and 1983 when the salary schedule would take effect. Now if a sheriff wants to get completely out of the prisoner feeding business right now, the bill takes that into consideration, too. It allows an agreement to

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