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can't make the major system changes unless we get to the root causes of the problem. And the fact is we lock up a lot of people, and we've doubled the number that we lock up in the last ten years. So closing the prisons doesn't create...get rid of the problem. It just shuffles the problem around. And I'm not going to stand here and be responsible for shortchanging the people who have to work in those facilities and manage those facilities, and be one of those states where you have problems in the prisons, which we haven't had to face here, because of "understaffing" and overcrowding, where you have people who might be harmed, either the people who work there or the people who are incarcerated there. We need to do a better job with treatment and getting to the front end of the problem, which is a heck of a lot cheaper than locking people up, and not pretend that we're...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR THOMPSON: ...going to solve the problem by closing a facility and jamming people someplace else. I don't think this is the solution to the problem. I think the solution lies in other areas, and I don't support doing this just because it makes us sound good to our constituents that we don't want to spend the money there. That's our responsibility. We have to take care of the fact that these people have come through the court system and they're in our prison system. We've got to either get through some sentencing guidelines. We have to get to the treatment issues. We have to do a whole lot of things on the front end. We can't get to it on the back end. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Thompson. Senator Wehrbein, on the Senator Dwite Pedersen amendment.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I'm going to continue to oppose this amendment also. I caution you a little bit on the \$3 million savings that is promoted here. It may or may not happen. I know it's going to end up in the status, but it may well come back to haunt us in the deficit a couple of years hence. I don't overreact to this. I just think we're taking too many steps too fast. And if I'm wrong, next year at this time I'll eat crow and say I was wrong.