

SENATOR REUTZEL: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I wanted to speak to the bill but I guess no one else is. Everyone else is speaking to the other parts and not the amendments, so I guess I will too. Senator Stoney just mentioned that we are talking about expanding this and we are having regional medical examiners. That is the same system as Oklahoma has. So that extrapolation of cost, I don't understand where that holds water at all because it is the same system as Oklahoma would have. Now, there were some other points brought up. Senator Kahle, I believe, mentioned that we have got....this all stemmed from one case. Well, certainly there has been one case that has had a lot of notoriety, but in the three years this committee has been looking into the matter...almost four years, in these four years we have run across a lot of cases. Now, there has only been one that has had a lot of notoriety. But there were cases at the Penitentiary. There are numerous cases. Senator DeCamp handed out some letters from people who have written the committee and that is only a small portion. They are saying that we do not have an adequate investigation system in this state. Now, there has been a lot of discussion that we have got a county coroner, we have got elected officials, let them do the job. Well, a county coroner is nothing more than the county attorney, and the county attorney is nothing more than someone who went through law school. Now, tell me where they teach at Creighton or here in Lincoln or any other law school where they teach anatomy, or forensic pathology. Having an attorney act as county coroner and come to a scene of a death and try to determine the cause of death at that point is ridiculous. It's like having the roto rooter man come in and do brain surgery. He doesn't have any training. The county attorney has no training in medical matters but yet we have relied on this system for him to come in two or three o'clock in the morning sometimes, get him out of bed, drag him out to a murder scene, and say, what is the cause of death. I have got a whole passel full of pictures here, and the County Attorney and the Police Chief in this particular instance said this was a suicide. Well, they are up here. Come up here and look at them and tell me this was a suicide. This is only one case. People don't strangle themselves. People don't set themselves on fire. People don't break their legs. People don't put a knife through their heart several times. That is not a suicide, but that is what one of the County Attorneys and the Police Chief said....let it alone, it is a suicide. And that is the system we have. Now, we don't always have those problems. Yes, that was a unique case, but we ran across