

May 18, 1981

LB 561

people less fortunate than us. I would urge this body to search our heart in that we have sort of committed to a regional concept, a commitment has been made. We have people in the regions that have not been there before. We have dangled a carrot, so to speak, before the regions as an incentive to pull these people into the various regions. Now I think it would be unconscionable if we didn't continue, if we didn't continue to maintain an adequate level of support. I urge you to support me in this effort and in this endeavor to adequately fund the mental retarded clientele of the State of Nebraska.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Marsh.

SENATOR MARSH: Mr. Speaker and members of the legislative body, I rise to support the override for \$777,258. This was included in the amount of dollars which the Appropriations Committee presented to this body. This was included in the amount which this body adopted and sent to the Governor's Office. The Appropriations Committee did not see fit to recommend any of the other items as a committee action but we do have some strong support within the committee for this one item to override for funding of the six regions for mental retardation. There has been unequal funding of staff members between the areas and it was our attempt to try to equalize some of the disparity which had been in the past. These dollars were adopted by a large majority of this body when 561 was before us the first time. I am one of the members of the Appropriations Committee which feels that it is very important that this item for the mental retarded of our state be included in this year's budget. The removal of this amount of money will seriously handicap, handicap the areas, the regions, as they try to provide services for not only those who currently are enrolled in programs but the additional persons who have been in our public education facilities who have passed the age of twenty-one and will no longer be served in those facilities but still continue to need services of one kind or another which we decided should be met on a regional basis. We also have additional persons who have been residents in Beatrice who will be leaving the facility at Beatrice and moving into the six regions. Without additional funding the needs of those currently being served, the needs of those coming from Beatrice, and the needs of the mentally retarded who have until now been served by public schools will not have sufficient funds to provide services in all three categories. I urge your override of this item for the mentally retarded of our state so that each of the regions have the opportunity to meet the needs in that region for our citizens who are mentally