

April 6, 1982

LB 761

SENATOR CLARK: Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President, and members of the Legislature, I am going to oppose it but maybe for a completely different reason than has been enumerated so far. If everybody in this body were to put their minds working and try to pick the one group, the one group in this state, who have no defense against the Legislature, who have no really well organized high paid lobbyist in here constantly, who really can't speak for themselves, in other words, the most defenseless group of all, human beings, mentally retarded, this kind of people, now if additional money is needed, for God's sake give them the money but don't solve your mental retarded problems by stealing from different segments. If that money is needed at Beatrice, holy mackerel, let them have it but don't steal from Region 4 so that this region can help their mentally regarded a little better. What level have we sank to when our whole system of handling our mentally retarded is who can put together a block of more votes to steal from the other mentally retarded and that is what it has developed into in recent years here. I can remember in a previous year we had you on the ropes and we stole for one of the other areas, when it is whoever can put together three mentally retarded regions so they can steal from the rest. I urge you to reject the amendment and indeed if additional money is needed have enough guts and responsibility to put it in, straight out, up front. I would submit that apparently what you have got now in the form the bill is in is what the Appropriations Committee after looking it over pretty carefully said is workable and reasonable. If it isn't, don't steal, appropriate the additional money. So I urge you to reject the amendment.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Hoagland.

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Mr. President, colleagues, I don't want to repeat a lot of the arguments that were made before. Let me emphasize that Senator Warner and Senator Marsh and Senator Goodrich from the Appropriations Committee, Senator Rumery from the Appropriations Committee have signed this particular amendment and they personally are in favor of it. Senator DeCamp is talking about stealing from one branch of the clients who are in need of mental retardation services and giving it to another. I don't think that really is a fair way of characterizing the issue. We have the situation here where because of the regions lost a million dollars in federal funds last fall with these budget increases that are in 761 right now they cannot adequately serve the clients they have