

of federal funds lost. So I would ask you to reject this particular amendment and ask Senator Peterson to try to redraft this and raise this issue in a format of new funds. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: The gentleman from Stanton, Senator Schellpeper, Senator Hartnett on deck.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members, I rise to support this amendment. Senator Peterson has been working on this for some time and I have been to several meetings with him and it just doesn't make sense to have this building up there sitting empty. There is people that want in. There is patients that need it and then not being used. I think the department is not looking at it in a realistic way and I think we need to have this amendment so that they will look at it and at least consider it. Right now they just say, no, take them out to Hastings. Well, that is not working. So I think since we have the building there, it's just not being used, I think we need to move these funds over and put it there. So I think this is a very important issue for the whole state, not just for Norfolk because it's going to be used by a lot of Omaha and Lincoln people also. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Hartnett, followed by Senators Lynch and Peterson.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I think Senator Scofield raised a point because I think Mike Wellman, who is a Deputy County Attorney in Sarpy County raised the point about he's very interested in the 34 additional beds in the Norfolk Regional Center. But, also, as you read his letter, he is also interested in why the people, the mental health people from Sarpy County can't go to Lincoln or to Hastings. Thank you, Senator Hefner. But...and it raised a question...and we did send a letter...my office sent a letter to the director of Public Institutions yesterday because if the people in Sarpy County, the county attorney and the police, and so forth, if they had their "druthers", they would really send...rather send them to Hastings and to Lincoln simply because it would save money and I guess I raised the point...I don't know who the expert is on the Appropriations Committee, I think it's Senator Hannibal, why this...why this...why we're in this, I guess, it's called a "catchman"...why..."catchman", why we are in this with Norfolk because it is from Sarpy County, it's a lot further distance than going either to Lincoln and Hastings and, as I