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LB 813

now. The director of the department could utilize those funds to open that wing.

SENATOR PETERSON: Another question. Would you support...you said maybe we should go a different route. Would you support a different amendment that added 565,000 onto the budget?

SENATOR HANNIBAL: No.

SENATOR PETERSON: Okay.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: I say that, Senator...I hate to be flippant, I say that because the department director and the agency have not asked for that. The Governor has not asked for it. The department has not asked for it. Nobody in the agency has asked for it. We have given them what they have asked...we have fulfilled their request. They feel that they can handle our needs with that request. I don't see any reason to add to it.

SENATOR PETERSON: If...if we are to use this federal money that we're supposed to get to match this, that is our taxpayers' money that is coming back. Isn't that right, Senator Hannibal?

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Yes.

SENATOR PETERSON: And to get some of these things done, if we go into emergency or half-way houses, that's going to cost an average of about \$400 a month to an average of \$152 a month in a regional center, whether it's Hastings or that, about what it figures out.

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR PETERSON: Now that does not make very good sense, does it?

SENATOR HANNIBAL: The federal...I will agree with you, federal funds are our real dollars. We don't talk about federal funds being not real dollars. Those are our dollars too. What concerns me is if we do not do this million three for the screening and the alternative placements, we are putting at risk \$190 million of Medicaid funds. Now it's realistic to say that that money isn't totally at risk but when you fail to follow federal mandates and we can't...we don't have to follow federal mandates. There's no law that says states have to follow