

comfortable with the decision we made at that time because we were going to allow the flexibility in the DPI to do what they felt was needed and that would have included revamping Norfolk for an expansion and number of beds. That is in their perusal now to do if they would so incline. On the other hand, they are going to have increasing demands, as has been stated well here before, about needing beds in other areas perhaps in the community. It may be converting nursing homes now to some care of the mentally ill, or whatever. Many of these issues have to be decided. Many of them are still coming up and are not really properly defined. And so I guess I just think we need to take a real long look at what we're doing here if we vote this because we are taking away a lot of flexibility that I think the DPI needs. Another problem that Senator Peterson has raised that I think is very legitimate is the fact that Hastings, in spite of the fact there appears to be beds there, are not available as they should be or at least not nearly as available as they should be. The restrictions there, the selection criteria are hard to define and are many times I think people that should be in there are not admitted. This definitely needs to be looked at and I think that we still have some time to look at this but...and that's really what I'm trying to say. I think we need to look a little further before we make such a major decision as this as transferring this money and locking in the renovation of Norfolk. And I'm talking we ought to solve this within the next few days, at least to Senator Peterson's satisfaction, I would hope. There is something amiss in the figures that we're getting from Hastings as to whether there is available beds or whether there isn't, as to whether those that need admission to that can be admitted or whether they can't. And, as a result, I am confused in this issue too because, as I said, based on what it was a month ago, I was comfortable. Today I'm not as comfortable with it but I also know that adopting this amendment will make a shift that I think will be untenable in the future in relation to the funds that are available from the feds as to whether...and also as to whether we can best serve all the people of the State of Nebraska. So I would urge caution if we do adopt this amendment because it will not solve the whole problem that we're having and so I would urge at this time not to adopt the amendment. You may have my additional time, Jackie.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Two minutes, Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Senator