

process to be responsible for it so that you get even more familiar with those particular agencies so that you can ask even more specific questions maybe when they come in. I don't know if that's a good idea or not but I do think it would be maybe good to do that and then pass it around a little bit so nobody gets possessive about any one agency. I have heard several suggestions and I think maybe that was part of that Judiciary Committee report that county jails be asked to take some of the prisoners and I think that idea certainly should be looked into but I think that we all recognize that that is a very short term solution and it's already been recognized here on the floor today that no matter what we do or when we build that it's probably going to be an ongoing problem. And I would like to remind you that that was one of the issues on the floor that we talked about when we talked about increasing from three to five years sentencing for possession of substances and I think that I have read enough articles recently to know that this is a nationwide trend and that it will probably continue until we find a different approach to deal with the problems. But I agree with Senator Chambers that there are lots of other things besides buildings that are important in our prison system. I, personally, had real questions about increasing the number of beds out at the State Penitentiary in the maximum security units and not increasing other beds out there because, as I understand it, there are problems in all the units. But, nevertheless, in spite of all of those things I think that I could stand up here and argue definitively, based upon the figures that we were given, that there really is a need and that if we don't do it this year, we're going to have to do it next year and if we don't do it next year, we're going to have to do it the year after that. So I guess I would just urge that you vote against this particular amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Elmer, would you care to discuss it? Followed by...oh, Senator Chambers, do you care to discuss it? Followed by Senators Scofield and Wehrbein.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, this area does make me very testy. And I notice how long they discuss things about Game and Parks, playtime and recreation, but I'm looking at what happens to people because of laws that the Legislature passes and the way judges choose to administer them. I had brought before the body the case of a young black woman in Omaha who was sentenced to a minimum of 15 months and maybe it was to three years because cocaine was found in her