

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Mr. Speaker, Senator Hall does make a good point and, as a matter of fact, again, I will reiterate I did take the liberty to sit in on the hearing that the Judiciary Committee had to see if I could hear anything new or different than what was presented to us and that very question did come up as to whether or not there would be alternative placements in existing county jails. I didn't hear that. I heard some...I heard some references to some ideas that there might be some vacant spaces available. However, the committee...I mean, the...again, the Corrections Department did do a survey and sent out to all the counties, all 93 counties, to find out what kind of capacity they did have and they got back quite a few responses. They got back some actual beds that could be available. However, the majority of those that responded would not commit to any. However, they indicated some willingness to talk about it. The problem is that I got the impression, and I had heard any number from 150 beds available across the state in the county jails that may be available that did not comport with the survey that was sent out. The two largest counties, Douglas County and Lancaster County, would not commit to any beds available and said they would work with them. And then we talk about the cost involved, as Senator Hall brought up, what the cost would be if you used the...moved the population into the existing system, and the information that we have, and I have not heard it refuted, and I would be interested in hearing it refuted if it were possible, is that the costs that were being alluded to by the counties was somewhere around 45, 46, 50 dollars per day. Actually, the cost, the operating cost of the facilities right now is, in our present institution, is about \$21 a day, 21.50, the new facility, excuse me. Then after you add the construction costs, as Senator Hall pointed out, you move up to about \$29 a day, including the construction costs, you move up to about \$29. The point is, what the Corrections Department will say to the Judiciary Committee, what they have said to us, that even if there were beds available, which is not certain, which is unlikely, and certainly wouldn't be available on a long-term basis, that it would be, indeed, more expensive for us to house the inmates there than it would be in these structures. Even notwithstanding that, we were talking at maximum, theoretically, based on what I heard in the Judiciary Committee, of 150 beds. We are looking at a bed population of somewhere around 400 in need. So, again, while I have great empathy for what Senator Hall and Senator Chambers is trying to say, I don't see any alternatives to what we have. I would love to see alternatives. I would love to say we don't have to spend