

There's no help I can get from this Legislature of substance. A serious problem and we say we'll have a study. What Michigan and Illinois are saying after the expenditure of millions of dollars, far in excess of what we're talking about here, they cannot build their way out of this problem. They built all of these prisons and it was a mistake to embark on that path because it has no end. One of the persons in corrections said they ought to refer to this country as the "United Prisons of America" because they have more prisons in this country, a larger prison population than any nation in the world. And if you couldn't point to things like racist sentencing, then you might say they just got more criminals. But the very injustices that put us in prison are used to create the statistics to show why there's a justification to mistreat us in the way that we're mistreated. But I see this issue as going beyond just Black people who are sentenced in a way that I think is unfair. I see it as bearing on how this society views people who step beyond the pale. I don't think that constructing these facilities will matter because Senator Warner told you...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...that when these are built you're overcrowded then, o so how is that solving the problem? And if you're going to be overcrowded then, this building is not...the project is not large enough. So either build all of the prisons you say you're going to need to alleviate the overcrowding or stop pretending that that is addressing the problem. I hope that we will not put this money into the budget. The justification for an Adjustment Center has not been made. For what it's worth, and I know they're all convicted criminals, but I get letters and calls from men who are out there living under what we call these terrible conditions who don't want the additional construction because that leads to a justification and avoiding dealing with the serious problems, not only out here that put people there, but the problems that exist within the institution.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Time. Senator Crosby.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. It seems to me when we went through this a couple of weeks ago, or maybe it was just a week ago, I voted not to fund the prison, the new prison, but I have some questions, Senator Chambers, that I think you can answer. I'll just ask you three or four and then