

two years, and I think it is, quite frankly, consistent with what Senator Scofield is trying to do and I agree with what she is trying to do and that is maybe take the juvenile justice system in a different direction in the area of incarceration, but to try to have it be a little bit more innovative and imaginative. So, with that, I would urge the adoption of this amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the amendment offered by Senator Ashford, Senator Wesely, would you care to discuss it, followed by Senators Haberman, Scofield and Nelson.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. Speaker, members, I would rise in support of the amendment. Senator Nelson and I had communication about this over the past few months. There was talk about placing this facility or some facility on the campus of NCCY in my district. We didn't like that idea, but this one is one I can support, one that we need to take some action on and so I would rise in support of the amendment and appreciate the chance to act on this amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Haberman. Senator Haberman. Senator Scofield, Senator Nelson on deck.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. President and members, I believe Senator Ashford has done an excellent job of outlining this problem and what we face and, as he pointed out, the opportunity to really look at this in any depth has not been taken here in the Legislature yet and this is a good chance to start talking about where we might want to go with this issue. As you know, we have put in 130,000 in the budget for...I may be wrong, that may be 120, 120,000 for supporting some of the community alternatives that have started in Omaha to try to address the problems. That, I think, is our first priority to try to help communities do prevention kinds of activities and we also, of course, as mentioned, have taken steps to talk about a study which is also important. One of the things that has been difficult at this point to determine whether we should open the beds or not at Kearney at this time I think is just because at this point in the process it has been difficult to figure out, is this the right course of action to take? I have taken the opportunity to talk to the director out at Kearney just this morning, as I know some of the rest of you have, and have been in communication with some other folks, but this was not presented at a hearing in the Appropriations Committee and it,