

again into an area of property tax where many are at their max levy anyway, or do they ask the county attorney or does the county attorney on his own decide to drop the charges? And in some cases in the State of Nebraska the charges have, in fact, been dropped on major cases simply because the county cannot and does not and could not obtain the funds. This is a situation that we do not need to have in the State of Nebraska. This is a situation that nobody in the small counties wants. They want to charge the alleged criminal, they want to have a fair trial, and they want the proper punishments due. In the larger counties, you have enough of each year of these type of instances that you can budget within the county. That's why it's not too much an effect on larger counties. You have a case record already. You can budget for that. The smaller counties very seldom will have that. I know on discussion on the floor a few senators said that they found it hard to believe that counties would drop charges in major cases. I can tell you that it happens. I can tell you that it has happened up until three months ago and it will continue to happen. That's, in essence, the bill. If LB 44 passes, it says if an alleged criminal's been deemed mentally incompetent and is sent to a state institution, the state will pay for that until the person is ready, deemed capable of standing trial, of which case then it is trial procedure and the county then picks up the costs at that point. I'd be glad to answer any questions if some are available. I would hope and urge the body's indulgence in this matter. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. For purposes of discussion, Senator Robak. I have two other lights on I believe that might have the same idea in mind. Senator Langford, did you care to discuss the matter? Senator Korshoj, did you care to discuss it. Senator Robak, has moved the previous question. There are no other lights. Senator Bernard-Stevens, would you care to make a closing comment?

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Just briefly, Mr. Speaker. This is, I think, an important policy question. The bill in the veto message, the veto message stated that it was clear that the counties take up the responsibility and I'd like to say I have no qualms with that. That is absolutely correct. What we're trying to do, though, is clarify the section of the statute that is unclear as to who should pick up the cost, and the section would be clarified to say that the state would pick up the cost of the state institution until time that the person would be