

decision. Senator Hartnett, four and a half hours later, four and a half hours they were finally contacted by someone in Lincoln. They could not send anyone to this community that evening so here sat the sheriff, what was he supposed to do? Was he supposed to take those children home and keep them? No, you can't expect him to do that. Can he put them in a hospital, take them down, what's he going to do with them? He has declared an emergency, but the workers were not available, they were not available to take care of the situation, so we're talking about children, and when I stand up here and raise my voice and talk loud about we need help on this issue, it's a lot different than on highways, on the University of Omaha and et cetera and et cetera. This is a different type an issue. This is an issue that money really won't solve, warm bodies will solve. So we have to say, now I supported Senator Warner's amendment. When they start to draw up how many people we're going to hire, where they are going to be placed, I hope that I'm included because we have a different situation. I just wanted to express that to you, Senator Hartnett, to put a little frosting on what Senator Kristensen said. In the western part of Nebraska we do have a problem with this issue. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BARRETT PRESIDING

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Any other discussion on the advancement of the bill? Senator Wesely, perhaps you'd like to close.

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members, thank you again for an excellent discussion on a very important bill. I think all of us are very concerned about child abuse, about children in foster care, and with the passage of this legislation, I think we'll take a giant step forward in trying to adequately provide for their protection and safety. The Warner amendment takes out the specific reference to the national guidelines. I can understand his concerns, but the intent is clear. We have national standards that we understand that we need to meet in order to adequately staff our protection of children, and I plan to work with Senator Kristensen and Senator Warner to further clarify the bill, but I think the specific reference is not necessary to accomplish the task at hand. There are now presently about 259 workers involved in this area. We are short by national standards 102 staff positions that we need to add. Eighteen were added last year. That leaves us 84 short. This