

handful of mentally-disordered sex offenders because of the law that we had, which has already been described by Senator Chizek, Senator Kristensen, and the situation was at a critical stage because of the backlog in the Department of Public Institutions unable to respond on a timely basis to the requirement that there be treatment for these individuals, so the prospect was very real that two years ago there were going to be mentally-disordered sex offenders let loose, without any treatment, back into the streets of this state. And Senator Chizek and myself worked with the Appropriations Committee and we were able to get 800,000 dollars additional money into the program to get rid of the backlog and meet the time deadlines that were in the statute. We averted that crisis two years ago, but we are back again to a critical stage and it's important that we pass this legislation. The short term solution was the additional money. The long term solution is this bill. We don't want to again get to a point where, because of budget cuts and budget problems, we have this backlog and, as you can see from some of the information Senator Kristensen's distributed, the case load of mentally-disordered sex offenders is way up and, if we've got these time deadlines on our hands and an inability to meet them, we could again face, in the near future, the possibility of mentally-disordered sex offenders having to be let loose. I don't think any of us want that and, in addition, we also have to clearly understand in programs, sometimes they can be successful and sometimes they cannot. There are those that can be treated and those that cannot and this bill attempts to target those that are going to benefit from treatment and get them that treatment and those that cannot, rather than waste time and money, recognize that and return those people back to incarceration where hopefully they will remain for as long as necessary to protect the public. And so, in my view, this is a very important piece of legislation. There may be a few bugs we have to discuss down the road, but in my view holding the department accountable for money, making sure that they use the money wisely, making sure the streets are safe and the court system works as it should will all be accomplished by this step taken by this legislation and it is an important bill and one that we should see advanced and hopefully passed very near future.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Does anyone else wish to speak to this bill? Seeing none, do you have closing, Senator Kristensen?