

January 23, 1992 LB 111, 691

LB 111.

SPEAKER BAACK: LB 111 advances. As announced earlier, LB 566 has been removed from the agenda. We will go to LB 691.

CLERK: LB 691 was a bill introduced by Senator Bernard-Stevens, and Senator Lowell Johnson. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 23 of last year, referred to the Judiciary, advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill, Mr. President.

SENATOR MORRISSEY PRESIDING

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Senator Bernard-Stevens, would you care to open on the bill.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Before I go too far on the bill, I want to make one brief comment in that I will be asking the Chair to pass over the bill after...or I will withdraw it from consent calendar after my opening. The reason I did not go ahead and just take it off totally, is I wanted to say at least a couple words about the bill and the reason for my going to withdraw it from consent calendar. It is a good bill. In fact it's a bill that the Legislature, a few years ago, passed, I think it was 44 to nothing, but it was line-itemed out by the Governor. And what the bill basically does is it says when you have a case out in the counties, and you have a client or an alleged criminal who's deemed mentally incompetent, when they are sent...deemed mentally incompetent, are sent to the mental health region, or whichever area that they'd be sent to for help, the counties pick up that cost. And one of the difficult parts of that, if you're a county, is that you have no way of budgeting. And certainly there have been things in the news now, and there are things been in the news many times in the past that sometimes these costs and people that are put into the...on mental...regional...mental health circumstances can be very, very prohibitive, and be a very, very long time. In some cases they can actually bust a small county's budget, which means that it makes it very difficult for them to do any of the county attorney, or prosecution, or being able to fund those programs. Since it's so difficult to fund, we felt it would really be more of a state burden, certainly would even out the costs everyone would be paying for the same...for the...for the treatment. On the other hand, this is consent calendar. We need to have uncontroversial things passed. But Senator Pirsch