

**SPEAKER BAACK:** Thank you, Senator Lindsay. Senator Wickersham.

**SENATOR WICKERSHAM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I remain incredulous every time somebody stands up and says we cannot keep putting off the problem. I thought I noted the number of times that we have addressed this issue since 1980 alone. It was incredible to me the number of times the body has visited this issue and actually done something as we may do this year. I don't understand the notion that we have buried our head or that we're not going to do anything. We have persistently over the years done something. Last time I was beginning to speak about the cost savings that are projected for LB 1059 and indicated that I thought those cost savings were illusory and I do because all we're talking about essentially is shifting the cost from the court system to the backs of the people. And I handed out a little sheet and it was captioned "getting to the courthouse under LB 1059", and it gives you examples of how long it takes to go from various places in the districts to where we would likely have a judge sitting. For example, in the 12th district I'm assuming that some time in the future district number 12 could have all of its judges located in Scottsbluff and if it did, those judges would be reluctant to travel to Chadron, to Rushville, to Alliance, to McCook, Kimball, the other places they would be asked to go because of the time that it would take them to travel there. Those judges would say it's inefficient for me to travel, I should be sitting on the bench. I should be deciding cases, I should be writing opinions, I should be taking care of the affairs of my court, I don't have time to be on the road, so I'm going to ask the litigants to come to Scottsbluff and that's where I'll hear their cases. Well what happens when the litigants have to travel to Scottsbluff? Who bears the cost? How do you get the lawyers, the witnesses and the litigants to travel all the way from Rushville to Scottsbluff when it takes each one of them round trip about four and a half hours? Who pays for that? How much does it cost? Is that efficient? Who does it save money? Does it save money for the State of Nebraska as a whole or does it simply shift the cost to people that need access to the courts, and in effect makes the courts even more inaccessible than they are now. I don't think that's a result that we would want. I think that's a result that could occur if we're not careful. I am concerned about all this discussion about population and how, if your population decreases, you're not entitled to services. Well all of that discussion about population does not take into