

SENATOR BEUTLER: And that is what makes this...this debate, I think, a little bit more difficult. Richardson County is a county plagued, and it has been plagued by floods for sever...for a couple of years anyway, and has tremendous expenses in terms of trying to recover from the flood damage, and from prior indigent services expenses. So some things are coming together in Richardson County that make that an unusual example in this particular day and age. They are not one of the smallest counties. Richardson County is somewhere in the middle of the pack. And, in fact, it would be interesting to know how Richardson County would get any funds out of this bill because there are at least 35 counties or so that are smaller than Richardson County whose levies are right up there, .50, .47, .46, right up with Richardson County. What makes Richardson County think they will get the money? There is nothing in the bill that says who gets the money or how the money is allocated, even among the smaller counties, assuming that one...

SPEAKER WITHEM: Time.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...of the criteria is the high levy.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Lynch.

SENATOR LYNCH: Mr. Speaker and members, I am not quite sure what I will do with this amendment. I think it is important for us to listen to what Senator Beutler has to say. It raises the general issue about equity. I was especially glad to hear Senator Warner talk about the need for equity, and I understand where Senator Matzke is coming from as it involves the counties that have very little, that are stuck with these social responsibilities they have based on the law. And as you all know, the counties are creatures of the Legislature. They can do no more or no less than what the law allows them to do. I am not sure if the number of counties will ever change, but I am only standing up now to remind you all that if, in fact, we are going to use an equity argument, which is fine, keep in mind human services at the same time. Serving the defense of those who are accused of being criminals is, obviously, an important constitutional responsibility, but I think equally important is serving those people that are disabled and those who are still on the waiting list. To be completely frank, we have some counties, large counties, the largest county that in some cases