

probably make me weary. But as you look through this, their amendments do have some purpose, and part of that is to try to illicit that this is a change in what we're doing and that you are giving these people some powers to go ahead and do indigent defense. And here's what I...I want to summarize for you where the bill is at right now. And I'm going to go from the...try to give you a thumbnail sketch, so if you've been in and out today or had one ear on this, maybe you can gain some feeling for what you're voting for in this committee amendment. We spend the first part of the bill basically creating a fund that will be state dollars that will go in and will be used for creating this revenue assistance...the County Revenue Assistance Act, and that will have a commission. That commission is public advocacy; it's going to be people from judicial districts across the State of Nebraska, so it's got broad geographic representation. The next thing that it will do is that commission will set forth and there will be a chairperson. Then there will be a chief counsel, and the chief counsel, she can do whatever she wants to do. She could set up a system of how we're going to allocate these resources. And the resources will probably be three to four, maybe five, at the most, staff people who will be salaried. They will not be paid on the hourly basis, they'll be salaried people who will go out and assist counties in major cases. Now this saves counties property tax dollars in the following reasons; one is you're not paying somebody on a per hourly basis; and two, you're going to get people who do this day in and day out and who have an expertise, who are less likely to make a mistake, or at least appealable errors, and it improves the quality of the defense. There's 49 cases out there in 1993 that were murder cases, not all first degree, not all first degree. But there's still significant serious cases that are out there being prosecuted. There's no way that these five people can cover all of them. But what they can do is provide assistance, and particularly in the higher profile ones, the ones that really cost a lot of money these individuals can come out and provide some assistance. It's not the magic wand. What is some of the fears? Some of the fears are that they're going to go off and do all these other things and try to encroach upon the public defenders. And Senator Lindsay's amendment that was just here, as I talked to him, and, unfortunately, we didn't get enough time to have a discourse, I'll probably take that and shape that into as long as it's clear that we don't want this office of public advocacy to encroach upon the powers and tell a public defender how he or she may operate their office. That's not what we're doing here. And, to that extent, I'm willing to