

Legislature for their patience and putting in a couple of long days on an issue that may not be the most exciting issue and is probably one that isn't very popular once in a while, and that's representing people who have been accused of terrible crimes in the State of Nebraska. There are people that don't want to defend them, but the real world is we have to, we have to. And there are a variety of other issues. And what this bill does, and where I got this concept was through this summer when we sat through those revenue hearings and what are we going to do about property tax relief. And the difficulty with property tax relief will come in the future days. I've had a bill in to do district county attorneys, but you really can't save a lot of money doing that. Where you can save money is people who are paid on the hour to represent particularly large, difficult cases. And it will help Douglas County, and it helps Douglas County real easily; it helps Lancaster County, that's the reason their commissioner was there and testified in favor, because they have cases where they have to pay by the hour. And that's paid by property tax. And if those people are not paid by the hour from property tax, but rather are paid from a pool of staff attorneys who are paid by the state, that directly saves property tax, there is no doubt about it. The issue is, does it save enough? It's not going to make a profound impact, but where do you start? Where do you start? The best part about this is it does another thing, it improves the quality of the system because you have people who do this on a full-time basis who don't do a defense of a capital case or a serious murder once every five years, once every ten years, they do it day in and day out and they improve the quality. Does that help the system? Yes, and that saves us money, too. And how does it do that? It does it real easy. They make less mistakes, there's less appeals, and that makes the system better. And it will save money, it will give us a better system, and, yes, you can stand up and down and try to turn this into a rural-urban debate, and that's unfortunate because it's not. This is a matter of addressing how are we going to face these services in the future. We are one of six states in this country who do not have the state providing some form of indigent defense, one of six. And I think this time when everybody cries for property tax relief and they cry for better defense, and I think you've all seen firsthand that you need good people at the trial level, you need good people at the appeal level and a post conviction relief to handle these cases. And this isn't something that's fun and popular to do, but it's good policy, it's good policy and it's going to save you some money. And besides, at the same