

Some people would say let's put them in chains and put them on a chain gang and go out and clean the highways. Has anybody looked into what that's going to cost? It's going to take a lot of staff, it's going to take some more vehicles. They need to be doing something instead of just sitting there. And to think about it, maybe that's why they got there is they didn't know how to think, and quite often that happens. That's what some of these programs are for is to help them think. Again, I want to mention to you the specifics, and this is very recent with the Nebraska State Correctional System, 54 percent of them will be hitting the streets in 18 months, 70 percent in 2 years, 84 percent within 3 years, and 95 percent sometime. We need to do something with them when we have them to try and change that. Our recidivism rate is 25 percent, that's low, people, compared to some states, but it's still pretty high. We need to do what we can with that. If we're not going to offer these programs and keep bringing them in and we're going to tough on crime, what is it going to cost to build another prison? Senator Wehrbein already knows that, he's putting money aside for it. And not just building bricks and mortar, we have to stop it. So if we're going to staff it and we're not going to put these programs in it, yeah, we'll save some money there, but you're going to still build more. We've got to do something to curb...

SENATOR HALL: One minute.

SENATOR PEDERSEN: ...this behavior and work programs have been part of that, a big part of that. And teaching them how to interview for a job, which is a big part of this, especially in the spending. It has to be done. People are tired of people also going to prison and just watching TV and shooting hoops and lifting weights and being entertained. These amendments are not entertainment, people, they're structured programming to help change. Thank you.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Pedersen. Senator Witek, your light is next.

SENATOR WITEK: Senator Pedersen, I...you and I have had this discussion several times, many times even over the last couple of years, and I guess we just agree to disagree on some of these areas. It's not that I'm not compassionate and don't want to help individuals, it's that I guess sometime you get to a point where individuals have to help themselves. And maybe that's where some of those individuals are when they get into prison,