

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. I know, story of my life again. Madam President, members of the body, I, again, apologize just for the amount of time that it has taken. I know I sent my staff home, and even bet Senator Abboud that I wouldn't be speaking tonight because I didn't think any of this actually would be up. But things change and unfortunately I have had to take a strong debate. Let me close on a couple points. Senator Kristensen, I really appreciate the talk, and I wish everyone had a chance to hear Senator Kristensen's talk because he said two things. Number one, he's going to support on the reconsideration, but, two, that was a message to Senator Cudaback that I would equally send. I don't think there's anyone that represents his district better, and I suppose Bill Barrett will get offended by this, for the most part, but, nonetheless, Jim, I don't know of anybody who works harder at working at a district and seeing their people and going to...being as close to the people as you are. And you have sent a good message today, in fact you scared the heck out of a lot of people and you've sent a strong message that it has to be done, and in that regard I thank you because it has been a frustrating thing to get things going. But I do believe that we need to reconsider and not do the Cudaback amendment because of two really overriding factors that besides the whole piece of juvenile justice and what we need to do for kids, not that Omaha is where it has to be for kids, but when we set the secure facility, where we were setting it was where we knew the community-based programs were and the majority of the kids, to keep the transportation costs down. We deliberately underbuilt, we deliberately set it at 75, knowing that we're going to have to expand. And it was stated last year and the year before that even that that expansion of the new 75 would be the one that would probably be central or western part of the state, or wherever the best site to be located would be, not necessarily in the metropolitan area. But if we do not reconsider, we will do two things, unfortunately. It will cost us more money because we'll have to...Geneva will continue to be overcrowded and our process will be disrupted. And I do believe that when we try to build, when we were talking a few years ago, Senator Kristensen I think will remember, about building a medium security prison, all of the communities in our part of the state, being central and western part of the state that were crying and competing to get that prison located in their community. Those communities have already had land that they had tried to put as an offer. Those communities would be the same communities, I believe, that would also put in a plan, to