

SENATOR WITEK: Yes.

CLERK: That's my note.

SPEAKER WITHEM: It is withdrawn. Senator Witek. Or, Mr. Clerk, excuse me, announce the amendment that will be brought up.

CLERK: Senator Witek would move to return for AM2388 that's found on page 2396.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Witek.

SENATOR WITEK: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, Senator Kristensen, I understand that you're involved in the bill ahead of this, and I don't want to take a whole lot of time on this amendment but it's an amendment that I had intended to offer on last stage of debate on Select File and I was not here that day. So I will go ahead and offer it and we don't have to take a whole lot of time discussing it because we don't have a whole lot of time, but I do want to allow individuals who may have some interest in this...in this amendment to have a chance to talk about it and vote on it. So I will keep it in and I do understand that you're involved in other things at this time. My amendment on page 2396, it's AM2388, is striking Sections 3 to 12 of Senator Kristensen's 646, which is the indigent defense bill. I sent a memo out to all senators on May 3rd explaining that 646 is intended to assist counties that have incurred extraordinary legal defense costs due to high profile cases such as murder cases. Probably the most prominent at this time is the Richardson County cases. The current approach of this bill at this time, as amended, sets up a commission that will loan defense attorneys to counties in indigent cases and we have appropriated half a million dollars to this bill. However, the intentions of 646 may not get accomplished because of all the bureaucracy that we've created with 646 and the amending that's been done. Besides the overhead of setting up the commission and staffing the office, we are requiring other tasks that I think would...would hinder the actual delivery of the legal services. Some of those tasks include conducting studies of and planned improvements of this indigent defense system in Nebraska. They're supposed to collect data on indigent defense systems and they're supposed to administer projects. I'm not sure what that language exactly is specifically to. Therefore, I filed an amendment to this bill to meet the intentions, what I