

SENATOR WARNER: Madam President, members of the Legislature, I intend to vote for LB 371 so my comments are relative primarily to 507 and Senator Kristensen has outlined very precisely that impact. But I want to tell you that that bill has a long history. I first started in 1987 as a result of a meeting that I went to in Denver that fiscal Chairs go to so, one of the few meetings I went to nationally on an annual basis, and that...they were talking a lot about the prison construction in those days, but one of the presentations I heard was a state that had a much more populated state than Nebraska had passed substantially tough penalties on drugs. It was passed unanimously by its Legislature, at least no no votes, and signed by the Governor. Everybody thought they did great and then they found out about three or four years later that all of a sudden they had several hundred of beds shortage in their prisons and the vast, something like two-thirds of those, was a result of that one piece of legislation though it was pointed out that when you do these penalty laws that you'd better look ahead. It's just like in the early seventies we looked 12 months ahead on the budget. Now if you look on the green sheet it's five and we talk further out than that from time to time and certainly on this kind of legislation you need to look further out than next year. It is good public policy in 507. Several people have said so. Nebraska is not alone. I mentioned before, Tennessee has had such a bill since 1985. They abide by it very carefully, never been challenged in Tennessee. There's a number of states that also have a cost impact analysis provided for, or required rather for any bill which may have an effect on prison population. It's simply good management of state resources to do that kind of planning. I was reading out of the file today, one short sentence which I summed it up very well and several of you have already said this in fact, but this was a quote from a legislator from another state and the comment was this, it's easy for people to talk tough about putting criminals behind bars but when you have to back it up you begin to see the dollars, costs associated with the public policy and, if you think sentences should be tougher, okay, but then provide the resources. And that's all it's about. The greatest disservice one legislature can do to another, a future one, is to put on their back costs which that Legislature was unwilling to look at or to recognize it was there and that's all that LB 507 was about was to have the foresight to look at the possible consequences and then provide the resources to carry out what was intended by the passage of that act. But in any event that was good policy. I intend to vote for LB 371 and if it takes a