

February 12, 1996 LB 1044

another year. I can understand that and I am concerned, too. But as we...I don't know how else you are going to reorganize something as massive as these agencies are. They take a huge amount of our money at the state level as well as the federal level, and we've got to move forward somehow, and I think this framework is one way that we can do that. So I'd urge you to strongly consider that, look at the details. Obviously, a lot of this work will be...have to come back next year when we will be debating the details, be a part of the activity in the interim and look into where you think these mistakes are being made, if that's what...if that's the tenor of what you believe. I...we've had several hearings that have made the paper this week in Appropriations. We are 900 persons over in our Department of Corrections at this point. We've added, I'm verifying in the testimony, but I think it was 200 years we've added in time to our correctional units because of the mandatory minimums that we did that changed a year ago. All of these things are costing us money. We've got a...we've got \$2 million in juvenile services, a proposal to add three more million. Our social ills are costing us money, and we can say what we'd like about wanting to reduce our costs; the point is we've got to do something. And if reorganization, in this case, is one way to control those costs and keep that line at least leveled out instead of going up, as Don Leuenberger has demonstrated in many of his briefings, then this is one way that we can get the cost of government under control. And so I would urge you to give strong consideration to this bill, move it forward, and get involved in the details as time goes along in the studies. Thank you.

PRESIDENT' ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Withem.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Yes, Madam President, members of the body, I'll rise in support of the committee amendments and the eventual passage of LB 1044. I wasn't even going to say much of anything, but a few speakers ago, the concept of will this bill save money or will it not save money came up, and I just wanted to try to put that whole issue of cost savings into somewhat of a context. And I guess the assumption that I have, that I think is an accurate one, is that without some type of reform there is no question about cost savings, there is no question about spending the same amount of money. Without a doubt, we are going to be spending more and more and more dollars in the areas covered by this bill. Why is that? It is because of the very