

to cut it. Adding the 300 beds and building a 60 to 80 million dollar prison is not going to cut it. As long as we continue to increase prison population, we have to make sure that the prison space is there. There is a proposal that we're going to be debating later on to deal with the question of should we or should we not build a prison. The committee, Appropriations Committee, has \$350,000 of planning money built into the budget for the construction of a new prison. That's one of the questions that I think ought to be debated, the question of do we need to...do we need to have that planning money, I think the plans are available, or should we bite the bullet now, should we go ahead and let's increase taxes and build that prison now, because it's something that at some point we are going to wish that we had. And the reason I say that is there are federal cases pending now. And I think some of those federal cases, or at least one of them is a case which is going to be going to trial very shortly. If our prison population continues at these levels, with no prison construction, with no additional beds coming on-line I don't think it's a real difficult decision for a federal court to start running our correctional system. I suspect that's not what any of us in this room want to occur. At that point we will simply do as we're told rather than being able to make rational policy decisions. I think the 200 beds that Senator Wehrbein proposes is an absolute must. And, yes, there are the considerations that Senator Maurstad discussed. Absolutely, those considerations are there. By the same token, anybody who does not want to add the modular units, I would hope would be one of those who would be the first to support the additional tax necessary to build an additional prison, because I don't think anybody can dispute, when looking at the numbers, we need a prison. We can't be tough on crime if we're not going to be...if we're not going to be willing...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR LINDSAY: ...to take those steps to provide space.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Madam Speaker, members. I realize that this is going to be confusing this morning for many of you and undecided what to do. And it's a little bit representative of the dilemma the Appropriations Committee went through, too, 'cause our original idea was to do...not do the modulars and go