

the major unit is that we needed to get something on-line and that's the reason we passed out the figures showing our excess overcapacity at this point and we needed to move on that.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Thank you. I'll give the rest of my time to Senator Chambers if he would like it.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Chambers, there's three minutes remaining.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Madam President, and thank you, Senator Hartnett. Members of the Legislature, in this three minutes I can't say everything I'd want to say, but I want to make it clear I'm opposed to any prison building. If we want to look at what has happened in other states which have built, used, spent hundreds of millions of dollars, not one of them has been able to build its way out of this problem because politicians do a lot of posturing, they frighten the public about the society being awash in crime because it's so easy to attack what they call criminals and get a lot of publicity about it. But then when the piper must be paid and the cost and bills come due, they start backing off and suddenly having second thoughts. As Senator Lynch began to touch on and Senator Pedersen, you're not looking at the underlying causes of crime. Senator Wehrbein is willing to raise taxes to build prisons but the Legislature is unwilling to even consider raising the minimum wage. When people cannot earn a decent living, when people are homeless, when people are ill, when they are poorly educated and you look in the prisons and you see them filled with semiliterate or illiterate people, those who are mentally and emotionally disturbed then we can see that all that's being addressed are symptoms. And a lot of the problems that lead to crime are created by people in this Legislature because we perpetuate inequity in society. We condemn people to homelessness, to illness, to ignorance for political gain. That is what drives this Legislature and every...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...other Legislature. So I find it very cynical to hear people talk about raising taxes to build prisons. What happens when we talk about money for education? What happens when we talk even about people in prison about the aspect of rehabilitation? What about preventative measures? We