

the body wants...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: ...to do. So we have, we are going to have a decision. We are going to have crunch time here. I suspect there is going to be more spending proposals come before us, if not now on General, it will come on Select. So we are going to have some decisions to make. I've made my decision and I think most of the Appropriations Committee did a week ago when we brought this proposal for a 200-bed unit forward, that we were going to save the 1.7 million that's in this particular amendment of Senator Lindsay's for other priority issues. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Pedersen.

SENATOR PEDERSEN: Madam President, members of the Legislature, just a couple of things briefly, I am going to support the amendment, and the reason I am, as what Senator Lindsay said, you know, build them and they will fill them, but in this case, we have overfilled them and haven't built them. We are operating in Nebraska at 153 percent capacity of our prisons. In the last year, just in the last year, we have grown over 300 prisoners in our adult facilities, and we are only going to build a 200-bed to take care of that. If we are going to put them in there, we are going to have a place to put them. There are on top of one another now. The prison people, the people in corrections, Harold Clarke and his people, have done an excellent job in working...in working towards some alternative ways of incarcerating people and they have got a long ways to go on that. They are working on that, but right now we're still at 153 percent capacity, and I will repeat again, we've put over 300 more prisoners in our system just in the last year, and we are only growing 200 beds. We don't have a place to put them, people. If we are going to put them in there, we've got to have a place to put them. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Maurstad.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Thank you, Madam President. I am going to echo what Senator Pedersen just commented, and that that's really what we...what's occurred is we haven't built and they've filled them anyway, and so one of those chicken and egg type of