

SENATOR PEDERSEN: Madam President, members of the Legislature, I'm going to talk about a couple of different things here again, beings we're talking about prisons and Rivendell as Rivendell was. Rivendell was a private company that came to Nebraska to open up an adolescent psychiatric treatment center. What happened, and I made... I don't want to make this sound obscure in any way, but my understanding is, is after the few years of operation, most of their clients were state clients sent there by DSS, and DSS found out that they weren't getting the services they were asking for, and the kids were not being taken care of, so they pulled their clients out of there and the place went broke. Now we've got a facility sitting out there that looks like it might be a good deal for the state, but the numbers that I've heard here that Senator Wesely mentioned and stuff is, is they probably asked the state for twice as much as they would anybody else in what it's worth. Senator Chambers is going to come up with an amendment about making it a mental health service again for the state, and we do need a mental health facility for youth in the state, those that are in the correctional, basically somewhat coming down the same avenue we were talking about yesterday when I was trying to get an amendment to do away with the secure confinement facility. This could be used for that and I probably am going to support Senator Chambers' amendment when that comes up, to the amendment to the amendment. If all we're going to do is just add more beds, Senator Chambers, I have not changed my thoughts on how I feel about this. If all we're going to do is add beds, then we are wasting our time, because again we must remember that about 85 percent of our prisoners are out within three years. And if we don't do something with them when we have them, you're going to get the same if not worse than what you put in, in the first place. I think most of you believe that. Most on the streets do; however, there are people who believe that all we need to do is lock them up. I support that, too, for violent criminals, and I don't believe in three strikes and you're out. I personally believe more than two strikes and maybe why even give them a second chance, for violent crimes, until you've proven that you've been able to do something with them. I never go to a parole hearing for any inmate that I've ever worked with without checking their behavior. I check their conduct record and I make sure it's clear before I'll go and talk for any inmate, whether I know them real well or not. We need to start looking at what we're going to do with them when we have them, and if all we're doing is building beds, whether it be the