

CLERK: Senator Wesely offers 3673. (See page 1268 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: This amendment is, basically, I do have a handout that will give you some background on it. It's LB 1176 which is a bill that the committee introduced after an interim study looking at the Lincoln Regional Center. We found a number of problems at the Lincoln Regional Center. If you recall the debate last year, it dealt with serious problems with morale, serious problems with services, people walking off the grounds, and there are some articles that are highlighted for you. What this bill does, and it was introduced and advanced unanimously, there's no opposition to the bill, what it does is the chief operating officers of the DPI facilities, that'd be the regional centers, would now be under the direction of the department director, not the medical director so that when difficulties arose as we had on the campus at the Lincoln Regional Center, there's more ability for the Director of the Department of Public Institutions to intervene. The Governor is given authority under this to extradite mentally ill dangerous persons. If you recall, one of the people that walked away went to West Virginia. We could not get them brought back. That state did not have a law to extradite back to Nebraska. That's still in conflict. We found out from that experience we also didn't have a similar law to help if other states have a walkaway come into our state so this allows the Governor to extradite back to the state when they so desire...when that's requested by the other state. We deal with peace officers and ability when someone walks away off the facility that there is a chance for a peace officer to hold pending the issuance of a warrant based again on the fact that the individual has walked away off of the facility. We also do allow the name and description of an individual who is considered dangerous, only in that case does the name and description of that person who's walked away would be made public in order to protect the public. This was needed, again, this comes from the police officers and sheriffs' offices who deal with these regional centers; and they are not able to get information and react to walkaways, and this provides information to them. The rehab model is the treatment model of preference at the regional centers under this. Minors would need to go through the juvenile court system versus Mental