

very important role in the juvenile justice process of rewriting that, along with the Governor and myself and the people who have supported it on the floor. When a young child, or a young juvenile gets into trouble, and it goes to a county court judge, or juvenile judge, in most parts of the state, there is nothing the judge can do. They can try to scare the child so they don't come back in the court again. They can put the child on probation in community service, or they could send the child to a girls' school or a boys' school, Kearney and Geneva. And there are so many, and those are the only options they have. There are so many people, young men, for example, being sent to Kearney that that one should be a nine to twelve month operation. It's only, at this point, about 30 days. The juveniles know that they will be out within 30 days, and there is nothing else that can be done, and so, consequently, we are seeing a tremendous increase in juvenile violence and juvenile crimes. When 988 passed a couple of years ago, the basic tone of the Legislature at that time was we know we have to deal with young people in the beginning of the process; we are committed to do so, we said. And the first thing we were going to do that was the crucial underpinning of anything else this body does in the future was the community-based programming. The community-based program was the first thing, was one of the first things that we did in the state that made a lot of sense in juvenile justice. We combined dollars of agencies, and it is even going to work better with LB 944 (sic) in this particular area of it. I am very appreciative of the Governor putting in 1044, putting in juvenile justice in LB 1044. We combined dollars. We didn't fight over whether the Medicaid certified or whose kid it was, and we then had an evaluation process in the beginning of the child getting into the system, and if the couns...if the family, the family, I am talking about, needed counseling, the dollars were there to help the family. If the child needed counseling, the dollars will be there to help that child. If the child needed...had difficulties because of sexual abuse, the dollars would be there for that child. If the child needed drugs or alcohol rehabilitation, the dollars would be there, and not only that, but the dollars would be there for the child and family to receive the help at the local area using the people that are trained in the field in the area. And it is a tremendous step forward, but we only had the ability to do four areas because it was new and they needed to have some time to get things done and done correctly. At this point, the juvenile justice community-based programs are in the Panhandle,