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also have a concern about building more prisons, and I think that we need to...to strictly evaluate the policy and how many beds that we want to build. I think maybe we can do both, build some new beds and veer off in the direction that Senator Pedersen is suggesting. I also think that we need to think about the long-term cost associated with all of those new beds, and we're talking about \$15 million a year additional cost for staffing an 800-900 bed prison, and that's not small potatoes. So if we could save some of those costs over the long run, I think that would be very beneficial. Somehow I would like to have somebody suggest some sort of...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...method by which we might move ahead with the beds that we absolutely need and...well, Senator Maurstad is going to say we need them all, and we do under the parameters that we have now, but I'd like for some of us to be able to sit down and evaluate, I'd like public hearings and so forth about going in this direction, and maybe somebody can suggest a way that we can do that. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Schimek. Senator Jensen announces that the following guests are visiting the Legislature. There are 40 fourth grade students here from Rockbrook Elementary in Omaha, Nebraska. They are with their teachers. (Introduces teachers.) They are all seated in the north balcony. Will you stand and be recognized, please. Welcome to the Legislature. Senator Suttle.

SENATOR SUTTLE: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. I don't know whether any of you have seen this report or whether it has been brought up this morning, from the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, that was just handed out. It is entitled Nebraska's Criminal Justice Drug and Violent Crime Strategy, 1997 to the Year 2000, and one of the things that they talk about is that Nebraska led the nation in inmate growth from June 30, 1995 to June 30, 1996, with 165 percent increase. The number of inmates grew from 2,801 to 3,248 during one-year time. Nebraska's prison population is projected to climb to more than 6,000 by the year 2005. Such projections have historically been accurate within