

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

January 20, 1999 LR 16

itself without the projected dispute that they had expected to have occur in that situation. The whereases recite some of the virtues of collaboration. Three that are outlined specifically are speedy, cost-effective, and enduring relations. Oftentimes, for example, arbitration could be done much more quickly than a court can get to. Most mediations in this state take two mediation process meetings and they're over within two to three weeks of having been taken to the Mediation Center. They are speedy. Cost-effective: mediations are now costing, oh, 200 dollars for a mediation, 200 to 250, and these are done oftentimes without lawyers, so that's a very cheap way of doing disputes. And, as far as enduring, one of the most surprising pieces of evidence that we have is that court-compelled court orders have a compliance rate somewhere in the mid-sixties, and, yet, mediated agreements are complied with in over 85 percent of the cases. This comes from a study of the Chicago court system that had two tracks between those things that were mediated and those things that were going to court. So they are enduring resolutions as well. There are applications in the legislative branch of both local and state government. One of the states of the country authorized local agencies, local governments, rather, to build in mediation into their zoning process and they found that zoning disputes were much less, that the accommodations of new permit holders were much greater to neighborhoods, and that there was a far greater creation of a sense of community when mediation was worked into the zoning in local government. It occurs in the executive branch in which a number of states have offices of dispute resolution that are used to come into public policy issues, most commonly, the environmental area, but I have to tell you that in the city of Lincoln we faced a very trying time following the death of a citizen. It was called the Renteria matter in Lincoln, and there was a mediation between the minority community, city agencies, and the police, in which we reviewed the practices of handling police matters, particularly with respect to Spanish-speaking citizens and the minority community, and we used it in a local executive function there to assist us. As you know, we've passed any number of acts that have allowed for the use of mediation in the judicial branch. This resolution suggests two things. It suggests that the Legislature encourage, to all levels of government, local and state, that they explore this concept of collaborative processes, that they