

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

April 14, 1999 LB 652

know that when that bill contains things with which I am strongly opposed to, I'll do all I can to keep that from becoming law. I'm not going to deal in a lot of statistics. I want us to keep thinking about children, children. I've heard people on this floor talk about the need still to put straps on children, beat children. I'll never accept that. And with that kind of attitude being held by some of my colleagues, I cannot trust saying that we ought to put children who should not be in a prison, put them in a prison and we'll treat them differently after they are there. They don't belong in a prison. They don't belong in a prison setting. And even if they add another addition to that prison, the children in that addition are still in prison. The razor wire is still there. They are convicts. They are prisoners. They are not children...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...who are put in a place to be rehabilitated. How are you going to rehabilitate somebody in an environment where that is not the intention, where the programs don't exist, and every time the child works up, he or she is confronted by prison surroundings, prison rules, prison regulations? Sometimes we, as adults, feel we're working under unfair pressure when I stand on this floor and operate under the rules. But then we blithely will say, well, because we think children ought not be at Kearney and Geneva, we're going to put them in a prison and that ought to be all right, and we're through with it. Oh, no, I'd like to see some of you all spend just about six days in one of those prisons and, see, you are not going to be on bread and water, you are not going to be abused by the guards. You're going to be treated with great consideration but you're going to find out...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Time.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...while you're there, if you cannot leave, that it's difficult to be deprived of your freedom, be watched all of the time, have people tell you every hour of every day what you can and cannot do,...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Time.