

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

April 19, 1999 LB 637

the United States. It was never included in the study. It's not put into their cost factors. And then I come back to this report, written by the Health and Human Services, saying they are drafting...I assume that's where this legislation did come from, this bill came from. The HHS Child Support Enforcement Unit is currently in the process of drafting legislation to create a state disbursement unit. I raise my eyebrows immediately when I see that. On the same report, page 4 previous to that: an agreement has been entered into with CONNECT, an acronym; I don't know what all these acronyms mean anymore; entered into with CONNECT, a Norston Company to assist the department in the development of a project plan to facilitate implementation of the State Disbursement Unit, nevermind we don't have the bill yet. I don't know what CONNECT is or who the Norston Company is they contracted with, but we'll try and get some answers on that. What are you going to do? The county clerk pointed out to my staff just a minute ago, what are they going to do when somebody comes in and says where's my check and they have to call HHS and they said we've done that. What did you do to us? I'm not ready to take that kind of criticism. We get enough punishment without inflicting any more upon ourselves. It seems to be working very well when you have a collection rate of even statewide average of 60 percent as opposed to national average of 27 percent. That's major difference. And I can see why there are people who need to work on this, but it does not apply to Nebraska. I, for one, am ready to face the locomotive and say enough's enough. Let's work with our congressional delegation and say, hey, here's our case, we're doing it well, we have accountability. These people have the ability to come in the clerks' offices and say, is my money here or where is it, and enforcement proceeds then. They can run down to the district or the county attorney and get this thing moving. The option we have, bracket the bill, we can bracket it with this...this time line, we can work on an amendment, and I would suggest we do just that. Get something put together here, develop another task force and don't spend another 111...or \$110,000 to have a flawed task force report, and actually no report. We really don't have report. There was never a consensus reached because of the turmoil involved with this task force. Get something put together now. We can do it yet this session, and they can be responsible back to the Legislature. We can monitor it. I'd suggest we have a couple