

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

April 27, 1999 LB 880

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD PRESIDING

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Brown. Further discussion on the Brown amendment to the committee amendments to LB 880, Senator Dwite Pedersen.

SENATOR DW. PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature. When Senator Brown came to me this morning and said she was going to be offering this amendment, and, yes, I'm back, my first request to her was, why would we close that and not go for the prison beds? Work, I'm not completely sold. Be quite honest with you on my feelings about the work camp, I'm not completely sold on that particular institution. But I've always said if it didn't work it could easily be turned into a work release center very quickly and we'd still have a world release center in that part of the state to put work release prisoners from that area of the state, and it would be 200 beds that would be very, very well-used, and I still believe that. The work camp itself I think is a system of hoops that we sent up...set up for somebody to jump through and, once they've jumped through the hoops, they're out and gone, and I think any time we set up hoops we don't have any lasting change, I believe. And the longer time we keep them and the more time that we use on working at jobs where you actually get money in your hand is where we start making some changes in our lives, and the work release center would be much more palatable to me than a work camp. However, I've been supportive of the work camp and saying, if it doesn't work, it could still be used for a work release center. I'm not supportive of that at this point that I would support the...I mean of that...changing it completely, but to kill it, I'm not so sure I couldn't vote for that, I mean to take a...we're spending a gob of money, a gob of money on corrections and I'm asking each and every one of you through the summer to spend some time going out to Corrections and talking to the people, and talking to the inmates, and talk...looking at the programs and comparing them to other states, and how many people we lock up and how many changes we have, how we count our recidivism rate, what we've done for ever...for change. For instance, do we have programs? Yes, we have programs. I can tell you about the Lincoln Correctional Center. We have some people in the Control Unit, most commonly called to you people would be the "hole", who are mentally ill.