

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

May 4, 1999

LB 880

taken care of. Can we do a better job? Yes. Do we need two departments to do it? No. Put our business heads on and take a look at it. I'm telling you from the heart, people, and from being in this field for most of my life that this is a duplication of services. Thank you.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Mr. Speaker, members, I'm not going to speak too long on this bill...amendment. I'm going to...but I just simply urge you to consider putting it back like it was at the introduction of the committee amendments. This is a commitment to the program that we have started and, admittedly, it's taken some few years to get things going. I would remind you...I...some things I have of what communities, different communities across the state have done to have programs tailored to their communities: Adams County has a plan for property crime, such as shoplifting; Lincoln has alternatives to incarceration for women; Lincoln County, day reporting center; Sherman County, juvenile prevention plan for minor in possession and vandalism; city of Omaha, driving during suspension diversion program. Each community has come forward with some programs that they want. I'm going to recognize that there's a difference of opinion here as to where we should go, but it appears to me, and not knowing all the background of this program, that there's some of these issues still need to be ironed out and I think properly a committee, the Judiciary Committee in many cases here, obviously there's been opposing or bills that have been introduced. The agreements have not been reached. But this is a commitment that we have set forward a few years ago. It is now having the money in there, \$500,000 for these granting process. Most of the machinery is in place for these and communities have acted in good faith to put these programs in perspective. So simply, at this point, I would encourage you to support this amendment at this point, restore that funding. If you want to look at it again and if you are somewhat confused, and perhaps as I am, as to which is the best way to go long term, that we can look at this over this summer and hopefully have some agreement with Senator Pedersen whether it should go under Probation or whether it should stay under Corrections. Those are the issues we're going to have to decide and I wouldn't pretend to think that there's simple answers to