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LB 637

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I'm not sure where to start here. I'm like Senator Kristensen, and I am a cosigner on this amendment, with a group of other people, obviously. The question of being late, this is a starting point, I guess, this amendment. And Senator Kristensen, I'm echoing his statement that this isn't the final product. This is a works in progress thing. I think it's simple enough that we can make it work. Try and answer questions of Senator Raikes, back there. The study was to look at whether or not we can salvage CHARTS and JUSTICE systems, and get them up and going. They're absolutely critical. I'm going to back up and look at...try and present a little bit of what I envision happening here. I had worked a good, lone time on an amendment of my own, which I have not even introduced and I won't. But we envision the clerks of the local district courts, and this is centralized child support, I realize, but there are an awful lot of people out there self-employed, paying child support. This works fine when you're talking about Union Pacific, ConAgra, Burlington Northern and what not, those folks can centralize, write one check, send it into the central collection. For the average person out there in Hitchcock County, Nebraska, paying child support, he still wants...or he's still going to be able, or she's going to be able to go to the clerk of the district court, under this plan, and if they have cash, that's fine, give that cash to the clerk of the district court, electronically transfer it down to the centralized collection, which we don't know what that's going to be. That's set up in the bill. We're going to have to work with Health and Human Services on that, centralized collection support, back to the clerks of the district court to disburse that. And we envision this happening in 48 hours or less. It's all electronic funds transfer. But in order to make this work, it's absolutely necessary that we have CHARTS and JUSTICE up and working in 100 percent of the counties. We can't have half of them, or 53 as we have now, or three-fourths of them, we have to have them all up so that this works. This amendment allows us to study that. It's not a complete rehash of what's been done, it's going to provide us some information, whether we can salvage this thing or just where we're going to go with CHARTS and JUSTICE. I know that Job 148 is supposed to end in June. I shudder to think what's going to happen when that goes down because I've had, personally, in my office clerks of the