

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

May 19, 1999

LB 878

discussion on the motion to override in LB 878, Senator Hilgert.

SENATOR HILGERT: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I was going to ask Senator Pedersen some questions, but I saw he left the floor. I talked with him earlier and when he mentioned the out-of-home placements that are occurring and he mentioned Douglas County, I'd like to bring the body's attention that some of those placements are not only out of the county but they're out of the state of Nebraska. More significantly, I'm going to be the one to raise it, they're sent to private institutions. Beyond that, they're...some of those institutions or...are actually for profit. It's very frustrating to be here and not have success on that bill, have the needs that Senator Thompson and others so ably presented to us, the frustration of not having enough money to go around and to answer all of these needs, that I hope, and I'm not saying that this is the silver bullet or whatever, but I think it's time we start considering to look at privatization of some aspects of...of this whole juvenile correction system. Privatization, perhaps we have to take a look at it. Perhaps it can be done more economically. Perhaps we can do it with all the safeguards that I'm sure many of our members would want. But I think it's time to start taking a look at that because it is getting increasingly frustrating to, year after year, delay what many believe needs to be done. And I say that not as someone who doesn't believe in public employees. I think the body would uniformly agree that I tend to be kind of strong on working and labor issues, but, frankly, it's not being done now. We're not replacing one job for another. And some of these placements are not only out of the state but they're private and for-profit institutions. So I hope that...Senator Bohlke mentioned the folks behind the glass, I hope that the administration does, when considering alternatives, does start looking at least, at least looking and weighing what parts of our system we could use the private sector in. So that's my two cents worth and, I hate to say it, but I think it's here and I think it would be probably part of a solution. So perhaps we ought to start a look at privatization of some of these aspects. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Hilgert. Senator Jones.

SENATOR JONES: Mr. Lieutenant Governor and members of the body,