

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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SENATOR CHAMBERS: And if you will remain standing, Senator Thompson, unless you want the exercise, and if this proposal that you're offering would be accepted, those children at level five would wind up in what I call the youth prison in Omaha. Is that correct?

SENATOR THOMPSON: Yes. Well, they could.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: If they are, to make...and I know that there will be some modifications in your answers. I'm asking direct questions, you're giving answers, but I'm not holding you to them as the final word but just for the sake of this discussion. In order for place to be made, space to be made at the Omaha prison, the ones who currently are there, some of them would have to be moved to another location. Is that correct?

SENATOR THOMPSON: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And where would they go?

SENATOR THOMPSON: As Senator Pedersen showed, we believe that the adult system can manage to that. And if I could just say a little bit more, one of the worries that I have about the way the system is working now is that even those youth who are 18 may only be at this facility for a few months. I think we should be using it, you call it a juvenile prison, I believe it should be a treatment facility. The kids who are there have serious needs. They're coming back to our communities. This is our shot to help give them the skills to leave behind the activities that they did before and to go forward with some skills and maybe treating some of those serious needs. Most of the kids who are there have serious chemical dependency needs, they have mental health...may have mental health issues. They may not have any family to even connect to, to go back to. So we need to do what we can to give them the skills when they get out to be able to be successful.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Now I'm going to phrase the question a different way. We do not have one facility large enough to accommodate all of these children who would be at this level five placement plus the children who right now are in the youth