

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

February 10, 2000 LB 652

that are responding to those direct placements by judges. We need to have a more comprehensive state system. We need to be funding it more effectively and, as Senator Suttle said, this is the responsibility of the state. This was never intended to be the counties' responsibility. It was for temporary situations that this part of statute was originally written. This is...this part of the amendment deals with bringing back to state responsibility that portion of the law which deals with the serious offenders who need to be taken from their homes and need to be provided treatment. We need to accept that responsibility. The bill...a couple people have been asking me about the fiscal note. The bill, as amended, will have no fiscal note. It will delay the implementation of this till the next budget and that way it will give time for the Department of Health and Human Services to prepare and make sure that they are in a position to handle these youth that would be...the way it would run is anybody who is already in these placements, the county would continue to pay until they are finished, but they...this would be starting at zero in terms of they don't have to pick up any that have already been put out there. This would be just youth, starting a year from now in July, that the courts determine need to be in out-of-home placements. They would then go through a process with the department. The department would determine the appropriate placement, contract for that placement, and hopefully, with the passage of this entire bill, have access to a secure facility, the facility in Omaha, for part of those youth who are serious chronic offenders, who judges, quite frankly, are frustrated with the very short length of stay at Kearney and the fact that we cannot keep them in a situation so they can be successful when they come out. So this bill attempts to address those problems, which are significant and have been going on for several years in our juvenile justice system. Some of you on other committees I know will have opportunities and have discussed other aspects of the juvenile justice system. This bill is basically dealing with very...the more serious and chronic offenders. It is not looking at...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR THOMPSON: ...the entire system, but this will deal with a portion of the system and the ability of the state to address