

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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advancement of LB 652 to E & R for engrossing. Those wishing to speak are Senators Chambers, Landis, Jensen, and Thompson. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, to show you to what extent I've been beguiled by my seatmate, I'm going to yield this speaking time to Senator Thompson.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Thompson.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you. There are two issues here. One with the first half of this bill deals with who should have the responsibility. To some people, and I was a county commissioner for awhile too, it's a finance issue, should counties have this responsibility, and they really shouldn't. This is a state responsibility and this bill will take it back as a state responsibility because the judges' options will no longer be those direct placements. They will have to place with the Office of Juvenile Services for out-of-home treatment unless, and there's some other provisions in the bill, there are county-funded programs that they could place them in. They could place them with the parent and so forth, but it takes away that institutional out-of-home placement as being an option. And that should be a state responsibility. The only reason it's fallen to the counties is because of the inadequacies of the state system. And the judges who have made these placements and the judge who made the placements in this particular situation I know, without having spent much time on this, I just heard this story a couple days ago, that it was out of concern for the public safety of the community and for treatment for the youth that these direct placements are made. I think the state system has to be created that provides this array of services; that there needs to be a central place that monitors these services. We can't have situations where kids are placed in a lot of places in and outside the state where the judges do not have the staff that OJS does to monitor some of these placements. It's up to Probation. To me, it's just not the way a system should look. So that's the first part of the bill. The second part of the bill deals with the transfer of the facility, and being passed out to you now, I think, Senator Chambers, this may get to your question, the way this would work is the first priority, as the bill states, is the Department of Correctional Services'