

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

April 3, 2000

LB 1217

I...I don't think that that's what you do with the mentally ill, you don't put them in jail, and that's what we're doing right now. And I would urge you to think carefully and to override this. We do have the money in our coffers to do this. We have neglected it in the past, especially for our youth, and all of these providers are on a shoestring, barely making it and having to beg, borrow or steal money from anybody they can find money from, and we are not providing what we should be as our responsibility. Please override this. Thank you.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Bourne.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I don't have a lot to add other than what Senator Stuhr and Senator Lynch have already said. I appreciate Senator Stuhr recognizing the value of mental health there even in Bradshaw, Nebraska. Here's some quick facts. Nebraska currently ranks 49th in terms of spending on community mental health. These mental health providers, the community-based providers, haven't had a raise in their reimbursement rate for...since 1994. As all the previous speakers indicated, there is a crisis here in Nebraska on mental health spending. We're just not doing enough. I realize how significant a override is and I appreciate that, but I do believe that there is a crisis in the state and I think that we need to address it and I think that the way to do it is with this override. Thank you.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Hilgert.

SENATOR HILGERT: Senator Jensen, do you...thank you, Mr. Speaker, members. Could I ask Senator Jensen a question, please?

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Jensen, would you respond?

SENATOR JENSEN: Yes.

SENATOR HILGERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just saw him moving so I wanted to tag him before he got too far away. How much is this...this line-item override are we talking about, Senator Jensen? What's the amount?