

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

April 5, 2000

LB 972

SENATOR BROWN: Thank you, Mr. President. I would follow up with what Senator Kristensen said, and echo and affirm everything that he has said. Yesterday, I think that the policy issue that was guiding us was good economic development, but we're talking about children here, and the policy that I think has to be first and foremost in our minds is what is the best management practices that are going to make sure that those children receive the money, and that the people who are...who have questions about it receive their answers in the most efficient way possible, and that we have some way to hold accountable...hold people accountable and to have a coherent management system. And we have already seen, by virtue of what...I believe by virtue of what happened with taking the management part of child support enforcement and having it in one unit of Health and Human Services and having the computer part of it, on which they are totally reliant, in another part of Health and Human Services, that it caused some issues around difficulties in communication. I don't know that you can say that the problems that we've had with the CHARTS system are directly related to that, but there are very clearly evident problems in communication. The last thing that we want in our Customer Service Unit is problems with communication. We don't want to give anyone any excuse to not be answering the questions that come forward to the Customer Service Unit as quickly and effectively and efficiently as possible. And also I think that there is an element of teamwork that's involved, and teamwork requires that people, by and large, are collocated. So I would echo what Senator Kristensen has said. And, Senator Kristensen, if there are any further things, if you'd like to engage in a dialogue about this any further, I'd be glad to yield you some time.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Kristensen.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Senator Brown, and I guess I want to make sure as we go along what our intentions really were because I read the committee amendment that says that the IV-D people shall establish a Customer Service Unit. They will then be able to do that themselves or that they will have a designee that will do that. I've always assumed at this point that that designee would be the Treasurer's Office.