

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

May 13, 2003

LB 407

Medicaid. To me it's...we also have administration cost. If you get rid of one-eighth of your inmate population out of 4,000 inmates in the state, I would guess that central administration should be able to cut some. You might also look at these numbers which are interesting. One of the interesting things that the amount of inmates in the state of Nebraska under inmate population total, actual population is 4,033 as of April 14. If you turn it around to the front page, we have 1,974, almost 2,000, employees to take care of 4,000 inmates. That's a little heavy, too, I would think in one area or another. I'm asking you to take a look at this. I'm very serious about it. I want it to go to a vote. We're talking about \$10 million worth of savings, and it can be done by releasing this many people who are going to be out in the next six months anyway. And there's more right behind them. If you look at that term, we have 831 more inmates that will be reaching their release date within a year. And if we parole people for two years, we have 1,136 people. Again, I want to emphasize that doesn't mean they're all ready to be discharged or ready to be put on parole. But there's got to be more than a third of them, especially when we can use nonviolent ones that we can put out. I would appreciate any support. I would ask for your support of this amendment. And if you've got any questions, I would try and answer them for you. Ten million dollars is not big money when we're looking at \$350 million shortfall after what the Appropriations Committee had cut, but it's a swat at it. And I think it's something we can do safely and it's something we need to do. It's time that we put our money where our mouth is or take the money out of the mouth and start putting it where it belongs. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Pedersen. You've heard the opening on AM1778 offered by Senator Dwite Pedersen to LB 407. Open for discussion on that amendment, Senator Tyson followed by Senators Don Pederson, Wehrbein, Bourne, Synowiecki, Aguilar, and Johnson. Senator Tyson.

SENATOR TYSON: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I rise in support of this amendment, although I always approach numbers like that in a rather wary fashion because, as is evidenced by our fluctuating school population, you might lose a couple of hundred students and not be able to lay off any