

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

March 17, 2004      LB 1083

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Thank you, Senator Janssen. As far as protocol, doesn't Senator Jensen open on the next section or we just continue debate?

SENATOR JANSSEN: He has already opened, so we'll continue debate.

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Okay. Okay. Thank you, Senator Janssen. I feel a need to join the choir as well. I think Senator Jensen, in his workings here with the LB 1083 and the concept behind it, I want to express my deep genuine appreciation to Senator Jensen, his leadership, the Governor. I think Senator Jensen has exemplified what true leadership is on this issue, and it is most appreciated. I think the concepts embodied in LB 1083 truly are patient-driven. I think that this idea or this concept of geographical disbursement of services to this particular population and their families is precisely, precisely what it needed in the state of Nebraska, and I think it represents a public policy shift of which should have been done long ago but of which we have to capitalize upon due to the leadership of Senator Jensen. My support, in large part, for this concept embodied in LB 1083 extends from my days in the probation department when I worked as a probation officer. One of the most frustrating segments of my job, one of the most frustrating parts of my job was to work with individuals that were at chronic stages of substance abuse, or those that were experiencing mental health episodes and not having available to me, as a probation officer, the resources in the community for these individuals to go to. It was oftentimes quite difficult. And what is important is...to know is that these particular individuals did not need...they were not in need of a regional center level of care, so they're really caught between the two systems--a lack of community-based infrastructure and resources and not needing, truly, truly not needing the level of care called for in a regional center. So the support, from my perspective, is really drawn from my, if you will, front-line experiences in the probation department, working with these individuals that were experiencing substance abuse and chronic mental health issues. And just to reiterate the need for this...for the concepts embodied in LB 1083, you know, we have a unique opportunity. We adopted last year, as a Legislature,