

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

March 18, 2004      LB 1089

bit to come back and say what they would have to do if they closed it. They had all kinds of doom and gloom that would happen if they did close it, and now we're to pat them on the back because we got \$13 million out of their budget. As I read it, that \$13 million that is in this budget is not something that they were cut. My colleagues, they were not cut. This is money that they had in their budget that they didn't use. This was sock money, and anytime that they've taken this money out of that budget, they've come back to us and said we got cut this. We didn't get cut nothing. They have had some cuts when they closed the best treatment center in the United States, when they closed NCTC and moved it to the Nebraska state pen. And, yes, we still have a treatment center there but it's not the treatment center it was. And they closed Hastings Regional Center, prison part of the Hastings Regional Center, not the mental hospital, and that was considered a cut. And they've rerented out that bed space to the feds. I've had bills that I came up with this year that would help them look at different ideas that they could use to help cut. A third of them prisoners out there, more than a third of them, out of 4,000 prisoners, are not dangerous in any way, shape, or form. They could be serving their time at home in their own bed, eating their own food, and using the electronic monitoring. If they can unlock my car in the parking lot of the Capitol...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR Dw. PEDERSEN: ...from Detroit, Michigan, we should be able to keep track of a nonviolent criminal without putting them in a \$33,000 a year bed. But when I offer them kind of bills, they come in and show, we're working on that. We're looking at that now. But nothing is happening. I'm a little disappointed that we always look at that's going to come out next year. In the out years, we're going to be short this, we're going to be short that. If it's happening here, people, it's got to be happening in the other bureaucracies. We have not closed a college. And do I want to close one? No. But we're going to have to do something besides come back and say, we've cut a little bit here, we've cut a little bit there. And we've cut quite a gob, but we haven't, as far as I'm concerned, done any cuts that made anybody get any tears in their eyes, and that is