

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

March 30, 2004 LB 1089

Just as one might be ordered to do an inpatient treatment program for chemical dependency, a 30-day or 45-day inpatient treatment program as a part of intensive supervision probation, one is then ordered to the Work Ethic Camp for the three-month program. So it was...it's been my personal experience that many individuals that have gone to the Work Ethic Camp probably...probably would not have gone to the State Penitentiary. That would be kind of...quite drastic. It's just an enhancement. The Work Ethic Camp is an enhancement to the array of services that are offered as part of an intensive supervision probation sentence. In response to Senator Baker, some of the claims with regard to eligibility, it's my understanding, and I'd stand corrected if I am corrected, but it's my understanding, at least that's the way it was two and a half, three years ago when I was there, is that those that if they're in...those that are at the Work Ethic Camp are there as a result of being sentenced to an intensive supervision probation. I did, indeed, have an opportunity to visit the camp. It is a wonderful program. I would lose the debate in terms of the wonderfulness of the program and perhaps even the effectiveness of the program, but we got a budget problem. We have a huge budget problem. Senator Bourne keeps speaking of our out years and what's coming down the pike, and here is an opportunity for us, on one level, and I argue the savings embodied in this amendment with regard to the additional 20 intensive supervision probation officers that we would bring on as a result of the adoption of this amendment would have huge, huge impact in them out years in terms of our Department of Corrections budget. I know the closing of the LCC last year, there was talk of the 500 inmates that it would free up and would allow, therefore, the closing of LCC. This is kind of a unique way to do it on the front end. We give our probation people the \$1.2 million on the front end, to interdict a population that may be headed to the State Penitentiary. I think it's something that we should seriously consider. I intend taking it to a vote, and I just encourage my colleagues to keep thinking of what we're under as far as the pressures of this budget. And I can assure you this amendment will meet...would not be brought to you if we were not staring at the budget problems that we're staring at. If we had the luxury available to us "budgetarily" to maintain the Work Ethic Camp,