

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

March 23, 2006 LB 1060

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Redfield, followed by Senator Erdman.

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I rise in support of the amendment and I want to commend Senator Howard for her courage in doing this because I know that she comes from a background working for HHS and it would be very easy for her to support more money to study the problem. But I think she's right, we've studied it long enough, and every day there's a child at risk. I think it's time to fix it. I think we know what to do. I think it's about good people and empowering good people to do their job, and I don't think studying it for another year and spending a half a million dollars is going to accomplish that, so I'm going to support the amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Redfield. Senator Brown, followed by Senator Howard. Is Senator Brown on the floor? Senator Brown is not on the floor. Next person, Senator Howard.

SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the body. Senator Pederson makes some excellent points when he discusses an independent study and, in fact, of the 12 studies that we've had done, I see at least one of these that was done by an independent group. That was the Orbit Group reporting for the Center for Families and Children and the Law, and that was in 2002, contracted for by Health and Human Services. Now when you consider this report was done by an independent group, the recommendations were made, I can't tell you what was implemented. I suspect very little. And in 2003, following the deaths of children in Nebraska, and I believe 28 of those children were under five years old, the Governor convened a task force of individuals from across the state. His intention was to bring people together that were familiar with child abuse in Nebraska, had some knowledge of the system, could make meaningful changes, and I respect that. Senator Pederson also mentions the positions that were appropriated. Very good point, 120 positions were appropriated at that time. Now it's important to realize that 80 of these were for case managers, 20 for support staff, and 20 were for supervisors. Now when you