

federal court will come in and demand that the State of Nebraska release prisoners because of prison overcrowding. This problem will be alleviated in the near future as a result of a medium security facility that is being constructed on the outskirts of Lincoln. But we will still be close to 133 percent of prison over capacity, so we will be working our way back up. My goal is to see that we do not have any prison overcrowding in the state, and that new facilities that will be constructed first look to this prison boot camp as an approach rather than building maximum security prisons. That's the intent behind this particular section of the bill. I might also add another point that has been under discussion here on the floor of the Legislature in a week, a week or so ago. Our Attorney General, Don Stenberg, issued a press release, and it criticized Senator Chambers for remarks that were made on the floor. My...my perspective on this was that I didn't feel that it added anything to the debate on this particular piece of legislation. I felt that the remarks were...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR ABBOUD: ...unfortunate in that it really didn't deal at all with the bill. And it's my hope that the Legislature will examine this as a body without being interfered by individuals outside of the body when it comes to the actual decisions on whether to advance or not advance the bill, or which amendments should be attached or not attached to the bill. I've had discussions with Senator Chambers about the comments, and I expressed my disbelief that the comments were made. But I feel that the comments, there's nothing that we can do about it, the comments were made, the accuracy of the comments I question, and it's my hope that the body would move beyond that. I'd be happy to answer any questions about the bill or about the comments that were raised towards another member in our body. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Abboud. Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Senator Abboud, would you answer a couple of questions I might have?

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Abboud.

SENATOR ABBOUD: Yes, Senator David Bernard-Stevens.