

of what we are doing. The money will not be available, and I think moving a program like this would be a hoax. So I will not vote for the bill.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Chambers. I'd like to recognize a special guest of Senator Ashford, Kyle Skiermont, who is here and he has been working for Senator Ashford in his office this week as an intern. He is a senior at Westside High School. Kyle, would you please stand up and be recognized, under the north balcony. Thank you. Senator Pedersen is next, followed by Senator Hohenstein, Senator Lindsay, and Senator Abboud.

SENATOR PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. The words that Senator Crosby said was at this stage of the game, and that's exactly, those of us who are supporting this bill, are looking at. LB 627 does not add prison beds. These people are already in the system and have been for some time. We have a department in the state called the Department of Corrections. It should be called the Department of Housing because we do very little correcting in our Correctional Department in the State of Nebraska. We have no step in the middle. We have probation or we have prison. We have 30 people under the age of 20 in our adult prison system, and more than half of these could gain from this type of a program. We need to do something, and in the meantime, while this is moving on, if it does not become a topnotch program that is funded, I will not vote for it. We need to have a program that is going to offer, not just drug and alcohol counseling because that's my field, we need to have job training, and after job training, we have to have job placement. We have to have self-worth. We have to do lots of things, and on a volunteer basis, as this one program for women in California, there's lots of different things we need to look at, but we need to look, people. The recidivism rate is unbelievable, and if we can do one little step that is going to stop a few of them from returning to the system, we need to do it, and I think we have what it takes in this body to do that. It would help the people who work in corrections. We have got to stop housing people. We have got to look at correcting. Now there are some people that need to be housed, and I want to state that too. Those that commit violent crimes, we want them housed and we don't want them back out there where they can hurt us or ours. But there is a big percentage of these people who can be rehabilitated and are. Let's do something. At this stage of the game, let's vote for