

pass legislation that increases inmate population, will on the front end recognize those per diem costs and health care costs, but also will give us a better handle on trying to predict and project what sort of, if any, actual building needs are there, because the situation is that right now the current budget of the Department of Corrections is about \$60 million a year, that's what we're spending in corrections for our present 2,000 plus inmates. But one of the things that...I know many of you have traveled to national legislative type activity, and you've heard the horror stories in state, after state, after state that has had tremendous budgetary problems caused by prison overcrowding. I mean you go to Texas, is one of the states under court order, was forced to spend \$13 million in attorneys fees alone, and that was litigation involved on per diems, health, prison construction. Florida has costs of \$20 million a year for construction and prison health system improvements to get under court order compliance. Puerto Rico was fined \$3.5 million for being over a court ordered capacity cap, and that fine was based on the number of prisoners over the cap. Now, as I said, 507 does not talk about the actual capital needs, it only talks about the per diem and health needs. But, one, it will tell exactly what sort of costs are going to be with that. So down the road when we have to plug them in, in a mainline appropriations bill, we can point back to this bill and say what it was going to be. And so I just think 507 is simply a bill that, when you're going to vote for legislation that will increase prison population, you need to go into it with your eyes open to know exactly what the anticipated cost will be, and over and above that give you some idea of what it may do to your overcrowding problem in the future. So, with that, I'd support LB 507.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Moore. Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the Legislature. I served on the Prison Overcrowding Task Force and the Task Force for Prison Alternatives that have been meeting, and there was a task force prior to that time. And in particular, the task force broke into several different groups, and they were such names and imaginative names as the Front End Group, the Back End Group, and I believe Senator Moore did the Institutions Group, maybe there was some reason that he was in charge of institutions. But I was lucky enough to serve on the front end committee that looked at ways to control the prison population from the beginning in terms of number of people,