

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I rise in opposition to the Bromm amendment. I just wanted to reiterate again the crisis we have in corrections. And I know I talked about this the other day, but I...I...it just, all of a sudden the Appropriations Committee wrestled with this and, on a daily basis down there, and it's...it's...it just makes us all sick to think that we're spending all of this money in corrections when there are reasonable and responsible alternatives that could be spent in education and health care and other things that are needed. In looking back at the 1989 appropriation for that biennium, the first year I was on the Appropriations Committee, our appropriation was 40 million, it's now over 60 million. And we are putting on line an additional three facilities in the Department of Corrections which didn't exist in 1989. And that isn't the end of it. We're looking at upgrading the existing facilities and further expansions unless we stop the bleeding. The...it...I note...and there was handed around...Let me ask Senator Abboud a question, if I could. Senator Abboud, are you around or...

SENATOR HALL: Senator Abboud, would you respond, please.

SENATOR ASHFORD: I think he's gone. But what I was going to ask him was whether or not he supported the bill as is. And I believe I can probably speak for him and say that, yes, he does. And I think we have to think about that a little bit, as members, as well, is that this is Senator Abboud's bill. Senator Abboud is an attorney, sat on the...sat on the Appropriations Committee for as long as I've been here, and has a great deal of experience in these matters. And I think we have...we should, at some point, give some deference to the bill's sponsor. If he feels as if, as he does, I think, that we've made significant strides in this area and that we need to implement this legislation, I think that a senator with, I believe, about ten or eleven years of experience, who has had a number of years experience on the Judiciary Committee and who is the chief sponsor of the bill that we are now discussing says that I accept this bill as is, it's...I find it somewhat difficult to not give him his head on that. And that's somewhat bothersome. Secondly, I...I...we all received a letter, dated May 17th, apparently from some county attorneys and some others. Actually the only county attorney that signed the letter was the county attorney from Lancaster County, and I guess there's one here from Buffalo County. And I don't see the name of the county attorney from Douglas County, Jim Jansen, or