

April 15, 1994

Reform Task Force and the passage of LB 1224 we've taken a bold step by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Nebraska's welfare system. I also propose to you that it was time to change the rules in dealing with juvenile offenders. Through the Governor's Conference on Youth and Violence and our own willingness to tackle the problem of youth violence together we have changed the rules. We've put teeth into the Nebraska Juvenile Justice System through the passage of LB 988, we can now deal with juvenile offenders more effectively by creating a framework of detention, prevention and intervention. While the boot camp proposal was removed from this initiative, I will continue to pursue the possibility of a boot camp for juvenile offenders in Nebraska. We provided our law enforcement officers with important crime fighting tools, AFIS, DNA testing and the ability to cross jurisdictional lines in order to pursue fleeing criminal suspects or render aid to officers. Also, we provided State Patrol carrier enforcement officers with the ability to make arrests when an infraction of state law occurs in their presence. These arrest will provide greater security and safety on the highways of Nebraska. A great deal was accomplished this session to address crime and violence and we must be prepared to continue the work next session and beyond. We took a proactive approach to health care reform and developed Nebraska solutions to Nebraska problems. With the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Robak, the Blue Ribbon Coalition and the Interagency Coordinating Commission as well as the private sector, Nebraska steered clear of a Washington gridlock. We've delivered to the people of Nebraska a more efficient, more accessible and cost-effective health care delivery system. Indeed, not only have we improved the system, but we cut through the red tape. This will help consumers access that system through increased availability of insurance coverage and by strengthening the standards of health care quality. We've provided more relief to those home owners who need it most through changes in the homestead exemption program. We will also take the opportunity to study in depth our homestead exemption program so that it works in the best interest of all Nebraskans. In two years we'll be reducing the tax on fertilizer. During the interim taxes taken from the ag sector will remain with the ag sector in the form of incentives for production of ethanol and for protection of our most important natural resources. We've exempted breeding livestock from the personal property tax rolls. We've worked for fairness and assessment and have made progress in equalization. By making people aware that unfunded mandates have a fiscal impact on local property taxes, we've

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