

February 13, 1995 LB 121

support Senator Beutler's amendment, but then I have another one that I'm going to offer also.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Preister, on the Beutler amendment.

SENATOR PREISTER: Thank you Honorable President, friends all, I appreciate the spirit and the intent behind Senator Beutler's amendment. I rise for some clarification. This is not extending additional privilege to prisoners. The areas that have been amended out of this bill are amended out only to apply to places where people actually live. Now I said that earlier but the prisoners would be afforded no additional exemption, no additional status as a result of the way the bill is originally drafted. They are living in a residence just as the students in a dormitory are living in a residence, just as the people living in the veterans' homes are living in a residence. That is the distinction. The people who live in a Game and Parks cabin are actually staying there overnight and residing in that cabin. Each of the areas, the state hospitals where people are residing, they are exempted in the bill itself. So for clarification this does not allow additional rights or privileges to people in prison to allow them to be exempted out. Although I understand what Senator Beutler is saying, and there is certainly that concern from all of us that those people who have been accused, tried and convicted of crimes do not deserve the rights that everyone else deserves, however I wanted to add that clarification. I also want to say that for those people who think this may not be a serious enough issue to deal with, you may not still have it on your desk but the report that was done by our own Research Division that was handed out by Senator Wesely last Friday may be in a stack of papers that you may have in front of you. On that information, and I will thank personally Martha Carter and our own Research Division who did this study, but who spent a lot of time in doing work that allows us to have good information to base our decisions on and I think we have an excellent Research Department here that does that. On page 6 of the report it says that the cost, the estimated smoking related health care cost in Nebraska in 1993 is \$402 million. Those of us who are concerned about cost and saving money in the state, those of us who are concerned about rising health care cost, those of us who think that we need to do something about Medicaid cost, those of us who are concerned because increasingly the federal government is shifting more of the cost of Medicaid to those of us who are here at the state