

April 3, 1979

LB 260

As you know, prior to January 1, 1979, individuals who were intoxicated were taken to jail and charged with public intoxication. Currently that cannot be done and these individuals in many cases are simply left alone. The philosophy behind LB 593 was that these individuals with alcohol problems need treatment and not criminal punishment and yet we have taken away the punishment and done nothing about the treatment. It is my intention to use the funds here through the appropriation in the A bill, generate about \$400,000 the next fiscal year, \$800,000 in the following fiscal year, to be used to fund alcohol services, in particular, detoxification centers. As you know almost every county in the State of Nebraska does have a jail facility where individuals who are intoxicated were taken prior to decriminalization. Yet today only 11 out of 93 counties have detoxification centers. In other words, there are 82 counties in the State of Nebraska with absolutely no detoxification services. So I am hopeful these monies can be used for that purpose and I would move that LB 260 as amended be advanced.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Keyes, do you wish to speak on the motion to advance?

SENATOR KEYES: Yes, I do. I have a couple of questions that the people of this state are entitled to have answered, and the first thing, I understand that there are, what, 17 or 19 counties that do have detoxification procedures and facilities but I can't find one in Sarpy County. I can't see a building being built and I just wonder when a man abides too much in the spirits and gets a little bit out of line and hasn't broken any law but he is in a condition that you cannot permit him to go out and do damage to the rest of the state or the rest of the evening, finish out his evening, what are we going to do with that man if we can't, we don't have a detoxification center, we are not going to throw him in jail, what are we going to do with him, Senator Cullan?

SENATOR CULLAN: LB 376 is coming up which would allow you to, first of all, under the current decriminalization law, you cannot pick him up at all.

SENATOR KEYES: That is right.

SENATOR CULLAN: If he does not want to go with you under current decriminalization law you cannot do anything. You can't take him home.

SENATOR KEYES: Unless you get in a fight with him.