

by court if subject financially unable to obtain. If the board pays for legal counsel for someone, if it comes out of their budget, might they go for the cheapest one, or would they get a public defender? Of course, it's not a criminal act, so I don't know where the public defender would come into it.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Would you respond, Senator Wesely, please.

SENATOR HIGGINS: I'm sorry to take this time, except that I missed the debate, as I said, when we were in Exec Session.

SENATOR WESELY: Sure. Senator Higgins, the public defender's office, I know, for instance, in Douglas County handles a lot of these for the indigent. Other individuals might hire their own counsel, if they desire to. But again...

SENATOR HIGGINS: An indigent?

SENATOR WESELY: Excuse me?

SENATOR HIGGINS: Excuse me, you didn't say an indigent would hire their own counsel?

SENATOR WESELY: No, I'm saying that in most cases the indigent would have access to the public defender's office. If they didn't want to utilize that, I guess they'd have other options, but again I don't think their interest is in getting the cheapest attorney to represent them, I would hope.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Well, they've got their budget to look at. I'll study this further. I think, on the advancement of the bill, I'm hesitant because I don't understand it that much. I'd like to know more about it. Thank you, Senator Wesely.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, with the passage of this bill and the signing of it by Governor Kerrey you will immediately have a new class of mentally ill, dangerous people, not because of anything they've done but because of a definition by the Department of Public Institutions agreed to by this Legislature. I don't like to admit to human feelings, but I