

decided that they would no longer charge counties for care in some state institutions and cut back that percentage of local money necessary. In Douglas County we started these programs in cooperation with the other four counties surrounding us and we created a local program using the monies, because it was given back to us and the priority should be to be spent on these kids rather than on roads and highways and other things. And it worked. It is the model now that is being used around the country, in fact, across the world, even in Denmark and Germany, even in Russia, people have come back to see our models. They need help today because of money. I would like to clear up something Senator Morehead said. She said something to the effect, I'm sure she didn't necessarily mean it, that all these community programs want to do is get as much money as state institutions are. Hell, we don't need that much money. I don't know what we would do with all that money. Even if you gave us half of what it costs, we couldn't spend it. But I also want to tell you that we have kids in these local programs that run into...

SPEAKER NICHOL: (Gavel.)

SENATOR LYNCH: God bless you...that run into and are being cared for with the same severity and care need. Douglas County Hospital, we have a program for the severely retarded infants, the most serious and difficult to care for, staff need is three times higher than some of those in medical settings. She mentioned that the state institutions should be more because they are medically based. They don't have to be medically based. I think you all realize that some of the kids that are in there probably don't have to be there either, either because of the things they mentioned, they have nobody else that loves them, and they have no parents that care or that can cope and we can understand that as well, or they come from communities that don't have the base programs that they should to take care of these people. Certainly community based programs are developmental oriented. That is as it should be. That is their whole role. That is the reason they exist, and they save the state a bundle, a bundle of money. The equity problem still exists. I think I've made my point. I appreciate your patience. I know it is awful late. But this is a terrible and a serious problem. As long as I know now, I really know now from talking to members of the Appropriations Committee that they will seriously consider the equity issue, and they