

down and say, yes, yes, we need to fund this, but not without having a chance to stand up here and tell you that in no way do I condone what took place during this process. We had several testifiers before the Appropriations Committee discussing this particular bill, several knowledgeable people, several people involved in the decision process including two district judges that were members of the probation systems review committee, and the director, Mr. Bob Keller, who is the administrator for the probation system. Their words to us were that since the bill did not say you are not going to bring those eight people in, then we read for further interpretation and we said we will bring them in. In spite of repeated conversations and letters and acknowledgements that they were not funded, they decided that these positions should be part of the probation system. One of the testifiers said, because that language wasn't specifically in there, then we felt we had to bring these eight people into our system.

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: My thought would be when that happens is, yes, that wording was not there. However, there was no funds there for it. Now we also didn't tell you that you couldn't hire an additional ten or twenty probation officers but the funds weren't there. Now would you say that you could do that and they should be brought in as part of the systems and, obviously, the answer would be no. The funding is as much legislative intention as is the wording in the bill. While I do not condone and I am very upset with the system as it was done, with the process as it was carried out, while I am very upset with that, I don't believe we can carry it to the extent of not funding these positions because ultimately the people in the State of Nebraska, the recipients of the program that these service department workers process, that service is not only good, it is needed and I can't get to the right punishment, the right violator, I will not go on and punish those that should not be. I will support the amendment.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Higgins. The next speaking order is Senators Goodrich, Warner, Scofield, and Hall. Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. I agree with Senator Hannibal that I, too, do not approve of the manner