

interesting to note the level of risk that they were willing to assume and the level of risk that they were willing to place their constituents in to make this decision, knowing full well that this wasn't in the budget and knowing full well that if the request for money was denied that there could be people out of work and that there could be a definite change in the system and had they chosen to leave these funded by the county, none of this would have had to have happened. There would not have been any risk assumed. Life would have gone on and we wouldn't have found ourselves here today. So I think that it is important to know that the probation committee and Mr. Keller made the decision to pick up these positions knowing that they were placing their constituents at risk. I think that is extremely important to think about for the future implications of other similar kinds of decisions. The things that really disturb me about this issue is, number one, the lack of communication that occurred after the committee knew that the issue was not in the budget which has led to a lot of these interpretive problems that have been raised on the floor. We didn't see anything brought into special session where there was adequate opportunity to talk about these things. The decision was simply made, in my opinion, in a very high-handed fashion, let's go ahead and do this and we are going to just simply ignore what is clearly legislative intent about whether we are going to fund these positions or not. There was a lack, in my opinion, of ultimate accountability and responsibility by the people most responsible for the future of the citizens of Douglas County, the people most responsible for protecting these children and for protecting the jobs of those people. I think those employees deserve better than this. I think those kids deserve better than this. I think there was an attitude there that this is a good program and we can ignore legislative intent. We are going to go ahead and do this. I guess I have to ask you then, how are we going to deal with future similar issues, many of which are going to face us this session? You are already aware of the kind of budget problems we face. You are already aware of the bills, the package of bills that has been introduced by the Appropriations Committee. And let me tell you, there are a good many issues there that also affect people, that are very serious decisions. So I think the kind of message that we send out there to say, well, if it is a good program and you really need it, the budget doesn't really mean anything, go ahead and fund it and then come back in and we will take