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# Bill package would work to aid juvenile offenders

**JUVENILES** from page 1

Services, the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and other state agencies.

The board would help determine "how we got in the mess we're in," Thompson said, referring to overcrowding and inefficiencies in the system.

Committee Chairman Sen. Kermit Brashear of Omaha said he was unsure the board would be worthwhile.

"I'm trying to decide if we're really going to accomplish anything or if this will just be one of the many reports that float around state government but don't get used," he said.

Another bill, LB652, would authorize a two-cent-per-pack cigarette tax hike to fund building repairs and improved staff and services at the state's Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers.

State juvenile facilities in Kearney and Geneva are filled beyond capacity with juvenile offenders, some of whom must live three to a room in rooms designed for one or two people.

Mike Zgud, representing a juvenile facility employees' union, said some of the buildings on the Kearney and Geneva facilities were "a deplorable

sight."

The state must provide more funding if those facilities are to continue handling juvenile offenders, he said.

Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha, who is a member of the Judiciary Committee, said the state should consider moving its juvenile justice centers to the eastern part of the state. Most juvenile offenders come from Omaha and Lincoln, he said, and they would be better served by facilities closer to their homes.

Thompson said the state should consider shifting toward more community-based handling of juvenile offenders. Even so, she said, the Geneva and Kearney facilities would remain indispensable.

Alan Jensen, administrator of the Geneva center, said the facility's current centralized location best served the needs of the entire state.

LB448 would add a \$10 fee to court filing fees. Counties would receive 60 percent of these additional funds to improve community juvenile justice systems, while the Office of Juvenile Services would receive the remaining 40 percent.

Chambers objected, saying the entire state should support additional support for the juvenile justice system,

"We need these types of facilities. They are the place of only resort for some of these kids."

SEN. NANCY THOMPSON

not just those who file court fees.

"I'm against any attempt to piggy-back everything on court costs," he said.

Thompson said she would prefer that the state's general fund, which is supplied by income and sales taxes, pay for increased community juvenile justice support. But given pressures on lawmakers to restrict spending, a general fund appropriation is unlikely, she said.

"I wish there were a better way, but I think this is the best we have to offer at this time," she said.

Another bill, LB447, would authorize an in-depth study of the state's juvenile probation system.

Muffy, your eyes are like limpid waterbombs, your lips glisten like freshly opened Alpo... How I yearn for the cold touch of your wet nose...



Police continue crackdown on 'unruly' parties

**PARTIES** from page 1

stores. The minors stand outside and ask people to buy for them.

Police are also working closely with bars and the Responsible Hospitality Council to make sure they are not serving alcohol to minors, Citta said.

"We are certainly looking to make sure people don't have access to alcohol if they are underage," Citta said.

Such police vigilance toward alcohol violations has contributed to a dramatic increase in the number of minor in possession of alcohol citations handed out over the last six years.

In 1993, 489 minors were cited for alcohol possession - a number that has steadily increased each year to 1,092 citations in 1998, a 123 percent increase over six years.

In 1998, there were 380 more citations issued than in 1997, a 53 percent increase in one year.

Casady said that most of those cited are 18-, 19- and 20-year-olds, but plenty of middle school and high school-aged children also are cited.

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