

SENATOR ASHFORD: Just very briefly, Madam President, members. All of us in the body have matters that we've worked on for a long time and I know with my LB 83 and some of this legislation I think is important that law enforcement supports and many citizens support and the NRA doesn't support, but it isn't going to be debated this year any more and that's something that I regret. But I do think, Senator Witrk, that this is a normal process and procedure to come to grips with a very, very difficult problem. I'm certainly, and I'm sure many...there are many senators in this body that feel the same way that we intend to and will vote on your amendments and either up or down, depending upon what we think about them and how, whether or not you can persuade us that your amendments are appropriate. But I do think that...and some of the problems that you've raised are critical, but I'll tell you, when we're trying to balance the state budget and we've got an option out there that can save the state, five, six, seven million dollars by diverting people out of the prison system into the communities, that is something worthy of discussion in this bill and there are lots of other issues that lots of people support that are in law enforcement that may not directly be related to the four amendments that you have placed on the desk. So this is a very good issue and I appreciate the fact that Senator Abboud and Senator Witek have brought this issue to us because it gives us an opportunity for the first time since I've been here to talk in a comprehensive way about criminal justice and prison reform. And if it takes a week or two weeks to do it, so be it, because I think it is one of the two or three most important issues that we'll be talking about in the session, but it doesn't do any good to suggest that senators are wheeling and dealing and that sort of thing when, in fact, what we're really trying to do is to come up with something that is substantively correct and give the senators in the body the opportunity to vote up or down on policy and not get bogged down in technicalities. This goes on a lot in the body and it's important to the process. There are lots of disappointments in this place and I've had them and everybody else who has been here a while have had them, and, Senator Witek, you'll have them too and you may have disappointments on this bill. But I can guarantee you that you will get a vote on this. I can pretty much guarantee you of that on your amendments, but let's get this bracketed till the sixth, take a look at where we're at, get on with the agenda because there are lots of other priority bills behind this bill that we could probably move quite a bit quicker and then come back to this bill when it's...and I'm sure Senator Chambers will not vote,