

talking about only individuals who are convicted of a felony for which a mandatory minimum sentence is prescribed which makes less even than that and that those individuals would not be eligible for parole. That's it.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Witek. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, when we did a lot of work trying to put together what has become known as the Nebraska Criminal Code, classifications of offenses was done. Because during various political changes usually at the national level, people were interested in trying to show that they're tough on crime. So they began to offer specific mandatory minimums in order to make it seem that the particular crime that was popular at that time to be against would be dealt with in a way that was tough. So you have some offenses that carry mandatory minimums, others that don't. There is no logic, there is no rational basis for this skewing of the system. Because that has happened, you'll find situations where somebody might want to offer a bill that says if an offense is committed in a certain location, the punishment is the next highest category. Well, some of those offenses, when you're dealing with misdemeanors, and these various types of exotic misdemeanors carry a mandatory minimum. The next step up has no minimum. So what you do by calling yourself increasing a penalty is to take somebody from a mandatory minimum, raise them to the next highest offense which has no mandatory and, in effect, you have reduced the punishment. That's the craziness that this Legislature has done and it has done it over my opposition down through the years and we come to these junctures where we are today and we see the asininity of it. But because there is a political agenda, an attempt is going to be undertaken to add more asininity to the whole thing. And my job, since I couldn't stop it before, is to at least prevent a worsening of it. I said that's what I would do, that's what I intend to do and I'm going to start with this division of the first amendment that Senator Witek has offered to carry this bill back to the road, back along the road whose destination is that of abomination. It is regrettable that people will take an individual who knows absolutely nothing about a subject and tell them, carry this bill and they can't answer a question. They don't know anything. We are supposed to be responsible legislators and some people who do that want to lecture others about our duties as legislators and how we ought to abide by the rules, then they bring us material which