

SENATOR ASHFORD: It res...our state statutes restrict the right to bargain, we do...these issues have come up before the Legislature before. And I don't think we should do this type of act in a willy-nilly fashion or all the time. And it isn't done all the time. I think the last time we discussed this was a couple years ago, as I said, regarding the State Patrol, and back in 1969 there was a major revision of this...of this law. But this is a very, very serious problem in our community, and the reason I'm going to advance this bill to Select File is because it is such a serious problem in our community. It is the number one, without any question at all, it is the number one concern in our community, amongst my constituents, is public safety. Collective bargaining is important in our state and we must continue to preserve collective bargaining, because it maintains peace and harmony amongst public employees and public employers. But sometimes when those two things collide, it is important that we sit back, talk about it...

PRESIDENT MOUL: Time.

SENATOR ASHFORD: ...and come up with a policy that is fair and reasonable and protects our citizens. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Ashford. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Madam President, members of the Legislature, obviously I'm opposed to the kill motion. Senator Robinson, I've handed out much information that would answer questions about the very concerns you have, but apparently the information is not read by a number of the senators, so I will hand it out again when we get to Select File. But when Senator Ashford talked, and Senator Witek talks about things that the union may give up or may not have, the study that was made of the city pointed out that the Omaha police have an assignment, in terms of work hours, different from any other one in the state. They're on four hours and off two hou...on four days, off two days. With others it's on five and off two. And, as a result, Omaha police officers have, I forget the number of days, it seems like they might have said 13 or 30, but anyway it's a substantial number of days more to their benefit that they don't have to work than other law enforcement officers in this state. Senator Pirsch made reference to the Shield magazine, which speaks for the Omaha police union, or purports to do so. There