

drug and alcohol free for a year prior to release. These are not things I don't think are too much to ask to be passed by the Legislature. Yes, they were drafted by the Attorney General's Office, the Attorney General of the State of Nebraska, that's a good reason to pass this kind of legislation is looking out for our safety and others here. We had this big discussion on safety this morning, and then we can turnaround in the afternoon and start seriously considering amendments by Senator Chambers to strike minimum sentencing for crack cocaine dealers. This is good law. It is what we have here in the State of Nebraska. We need the mandatory minimum. I am sure some of the attorneys can stand up and explain it better than I can, but that is not what we brought this legislation here for. We brought this here to strengthen the laws in the State of Nebraska for drug dealing. You know, we are all talking about our concerns on crime, and yet when it comes time to actually put in force some new legislation dealing with these new areas, no one here is willing to do that. Senator Chambers is certainly being an obstructionist in this whole process. It has been 15 years, according to an editorial in the Omaha World-Herald, November 20th, it's been 15 years since the Legislature has passed any extensively revised Nebraska criminal laws. Much has changed in the intervening years. Society has become more violent in Nebraska and elsewhere. The abuse of hard drugs has become more entrenched, not only in the cities, but in the small towns. This is legislation that is needed because of those changes. We have to come back every now and then and go through our criminal law and make these changes. They've tried many times unsuccessfully to get these out of committee. I had a discussion with Senator Chambers about this is our opportunity because these are out of committee now and we can discuss them. And, Senator Chambers, I appreciate your offer to work on this bill but this bill has already had extensive work on it from many people, and I think it's in shape to pass. I think it's in shape just as it is to pass, and I would ask you not to vote for the Chambers amendment, and start changing the mandatory minimum sentencing here in the State of Nebraska no matter what he says. You know unless you look through this and this is explained extensively to you, some of it may, in a strange way, make sense, but it does not. This is here for a purpose. These mandatory minimums are in place now in the State of Nebraska. The felonies that we are talking about are crack and cocaine dealers right now. These are people we all want to get tougher on, not change the minimums or the good time for these people. So I ask you not to vote for any changes, any changes that