

changed to make it more precise and specific. The bill strikes from the definition the words "alarms, annoys or harasses" and inserts "terrifies, threatens or intimidates". This change makes the definition much more precise as to what constitutes harassment. The reason we did this is because the words "terrify, threaten and intimidate" all have accepted meanings in law. One of the problems with the current law is that the language used to define harassment was emphasized and subject to different interpretations and by making that change we strengthen the definition and thus make clear the intent. And most importantly LB 299 strikes the requirement that in order to commit the crime of stalking the perpetrator must violate the provisions of a protection order. The requirement of a protection, having a protection order in place was found to place an undue burden on the stalking victim and we felt that it was just one more hurdle that they had to jump through, and in most cases in order to have a protection order in place, the person requesting the protection order has to know the perpetrator and in many stalking cases the victim does not know the perpetrator and cannot obtain such an order. Also as was correctly pointed out last year, violations of restraining orders and protection orders carry their own penalties and are already violations of the law. The victim in order to obtain a restraining order or protection order must have already gone through the judicial system. LB 299, by removing the requirement for the protection order, clearly defines stalking as a separate crime. It does not depend on the violation of some other criminal statute. Before I conclude I want to make sure that everybody understands that it's not the intent of this bill to any way infringe on constitutionally protected rights such as freedom of speech, assembly, due process or freedom of the press. This bill is only directed at criminal activity as defined by the bill, activity that serves no legitimate or legal purpose and it's clearly meant to cause fear and terror in the victim, and I believe LB 299 will make the stalking law specific and precise. It will provide relief to the victims of this very sick crime. I ask for your support and advancement of LB 299. Thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein, Senator Robak. Senator Wehrbein, your light is on.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Madam President and members, I would like to ask a couple of questions, Jennie, and I don't know whether you or maybe someone, an attorney in here. I've got a