

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Chambers wishes to withdraw the motion to reconsider. So ordered.

CLERK: In that case...

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Pirsch, there were no committee amendments. This bill came to the floor without committee report. You are recognized to open on the bill. I understand you have amendments. You may open, if you care to, or go directly to your amendments.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that, and I appreciate, Senator Chambers, so we can deal directly with the constitutional amendment for victims, crime victims. We should remember that this is for victims of violent crime, and as are enumerated in the statutes. I will bring forward and talk about the amendment and give you a little bit of background on this amendment. If you will recall in the midst of all of the crime summits that were occurring, the Nebraska Coalition for Victims of Crime called for a crime victims summit. And at that summit, we had representatives from the Governor. The Attorney General, Don Stenberg, was there. We had senators there. And, also, we had Rick Boucher of the Nebraska County Attorneys Association, as well as Sam Cooper from Douglas County attorney, and Gary Lacey, the Lancaster County Attorney. At that conference, at that summit meeting, we hammered out the words that are in the amendment that is before you on Journal page 495. And this is what we talked about when you were so helpful to have this bill to come up to the floor to be discussed. The constitutional amendment is something that has been needed, has been presented in 14 states, and I hope that you still have this booklet in your file, which talks about the various states and the kind of language that is in that...are in the various states. And they do differ, and they differ quite widely. In Arizona where there was an initiative petition to put victims in the Constitution, victims rights in the Constitution, they are very explicit, they are very lengthy, and they are very much specific about what victims should be accorded in law. We have, in Nebraska, with the county attorneys, fashioned a framework, a framework that goes very beautifully with what we have in the statutes, what we put into the Bill of Rights in the statutes in 1981. This framework should be in the Constitution as rights for the criminal are. This takes nothing away from a defendant's rights, from an accused rights. This simply puts a framework