

March 30, 1979

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SPEAKER MARVEL: The Chair recognizes Senator Venditte, and then I'm going to recognize Senator Murphy for his motion. Senator Venditte.

SENATOR VENDITTE: Well, Mr. President, I think I have the answer to the problem here on the floor of the Legislature this morning if one thing could be done, and perhaps maybe Senator Wesely could do this during his interim study. Is it perhaps possible, ladies and gentlemen, to take out the active ingredient in alcohol that makes the drug become physically and psychologically addictive? Scientifically people we can't do that. Scientifically it's literally impossible to do just that. You know, we're looking at a panacea this morning, ladies and gentlemen, and the word I have heard so often this morning is the word "detox center". What really goes on... what really goes on in a detox center? What is it there that makes people become less...less addictive to alcohol? Is there something there that I know I could send a constituent of mine to and say, look if you go to that detox center, I'll guarantee that you'll leave there and never touch another drop of alcohol the rest of your life? We know that isn't true. I'm not sure what the rate of recidivism is there. I think Senator Kelly mentioned it well...prevention. What is prevention? Well, the hands-on thing that we have here in this Legislature, I guess two things...number one is example, and number two is education. You may get a chuckle out of this ladies and gentlemen, but I, in my lifetime, have consumed less than a six-pack of beer...less than a six-pack of beer in my lifetime. Why? Well, I would suspect that's because my parents were not drinking parents, but on the other hand I think that if my parents were drinking parents, I would have become another person involved in alcoholism. I think example is so important today, and I think the kind of legislation we let leave here tells the people what kind of...tells the people of this state what kind of people we are down here. I have a great deal of respect for the members of the Public Health and Welfare Committee and I think that if...and I'm sure they have spent a great deal of time in study on this issue, and perhaps a great deal more needs to be done. But I think it would help all of us to understand, Senator Cullan, and perhaps with whatever time I have left, could you tell us and members of the Legislature and Senator Cullan, I have to admit I have never been to a detox center. I know Senator Barnett invited several times members of the Judiciary Committee to go in and...but Senator Sam, what goes on in a detox center today? Very briefly, can you just