

a lawyer and a judge. They are afraid of the judges. Suppose there were a legislator who would plead guilty, Senator Clark, to stealing \$50,000. After having legal representation and a complete explanation of what the charge was and the nature of the offense, then we are going to sit up here and say, well I guess he didn't really know what he was doing when he pleaded guilty. Then that should mean he didn't know what he did when he stole the money either. We are dealing with a category of people who have been placed on a pedestal. They are given consideration that nobody else is given. Their words carry weight that nobody else's word will carry. So I think if we are going to give them this awesome responsibility and power to rule on the lives of other people, they must be held to a very high standard of conduct. If a judge can be removed from the bench for conduct that does not constitute a crime, why should he not be removed when he pleads guilty to a felony? It is hard to argue this point because it is like trying to break down an open door. It seems to me it would be obvious to everybody, but apparently we want people to keep the title of judge after they have pleaded guilty to a felony, any felony. He could be caught debauching a young boy. Then he could plead guilty to it and Senator Beutler and Senator Hoagland want to say, well until the technical period runs out during which he could file an appeal, although I don't know how many circumstances under which you can file an appeal when you pleaded guilty, let him continue to be a judge even though he is not on the bench. I think you ought to consider the amendment, consider what the judiciary is supposed to be and understand that any judge who would plead guilty would certainly know what he or she is doing and if he or she were mentally incompetent at the time the plea was entered, then he or she is not fit to be a judge anyway. I think you ought to accept this amendment. It will not hurt this bill and it will not appear to be a bill to protect judges from the consequences of their conduct when other public officials are not protected from the consequences of their conduct. The judges should be held to an extra high standard of ethical conduct, morality and public responsibility and although the lawyers would say that is not the case, I would like to hear a judge say out of his own mouth the things that are being said on this floor by the lawyers, but that is why they call the lawyer a mouthpiece. The lawyer says the thing that the client does not want to say or doesn't feel he or she ought to say.