

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I would like to vigorously oppose this amendment. This, you know of all the areas of the law where it is bad to start making law from the floor of the Legislature, the criminal law is the very worst because each word means something, each phrase means something, and when you start fiddling around with things, you make big changes without knowing it sometimes. Basically I don't see any need to change the law. We have a law. It is called "robbery". A person commits robbery if with the intent to steal he forcibly or by violence or by putting in fear takes from a person of another any money or personal property, which is a purse, of any value whatever and the penalty for robbery is a Class II felony which is a more severe penalty than what is being suggested in this amendment. And what I am suggesting to you is that we are doing the very opposite thing that this Legislature did a few years ago when we came in here and cleaned up our criminal code. We are confusing the law again. We are adding more and more statutes for individual situations that are taken care of by the general statute. I would like to know what is wrong with the robbery statute, "by putting in fear", and I would like to know if there is any prosecutor in this state who has objected to prosecuting a purse snatcher under the robbery statute or who would dare to say that he could not prosecute under the robbery statute. I think this amendment is totally unnecessary. At the very least it should go to the Judiciary Committee for a review as to its necessity and as to its advisability. Thank you.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Koch.

SENATOR KOCH: Mr. Chairman, members of the body, I concur with Senator Beutler. I read this amendment as obvious that a few people in utilities don't think they are protected. Somebody comes into my home...which amendment are we on? Purse snatcher. Well, that is already covered. Why do we have to put purse snatchers in there? It is redundant and I oppose the amendment.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Nichol.

SENATOR NICHOL: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature, I would oppose this amendment at this time. As I recall, last year the county attorneys wanted this in because, as I recall from memory and I hate to do this because it just came to my attention, but the reason they wanted this was so that they could use plea bargaining on youthful offenders