

of Police in North Platte, Police Chief Gutschenritter, and he says, "The Nebraska Legislature is currently considering legislation which would require mandatory jail sentences for anyone convicted of driving while under the influence of alcohol. In my opinion, this legislation is long overdue. It is sorely needed, will be a positive step in reducing the number of senseless murders caused by drunks while operating a motor vehicle." He goes on to say, because there has been expressed concern by some of my colleagues with reference to officers being reluctant to make arrests if such a punitive law were adopted, he says, and I quote, "I believe I can speak for the majority of law enforcement officers when I say that absolutely nothing could be further from the truth. If there is any reluctance today on the part of law enforcement officers in making drunk driving arrests, it is knowing that the drunk driver now arrested, if tried and convicted, will often receive probation, and in knowing the drunk driver will often be released from custody before the officer ever completes his report." I also found a graphic example in a testimony from an ex-drunk which appeared in the Grand Island Independent. I would like to share that with you. This gentleman says, and I quote, "I believe I am qualified to speak on this subject because I was a drunk driver from age 16 to 36. I was arrested 7 times during this period for DWI. I wrecked every car I ever owned and several that I didn't own due to DWI." He said, "I don't believe I ever killed anyone in these wrecks but I put some people in the hospital and I drove some mothers nearly crazy. I drove cars while drunk both with and without the driver's license. I have never been convicted in a court of law of DWI. In fact, I have never been before a judge on a DWI charge. I have always had a lawyer plea bargain the charges down to reckless or careless driving." He says, "I quit drinking alcohol over ten years ago, but not because of DWI problems, because of job, family problems caused by my drinking. My DWIs were never a problem to me as long as I could get the charges reduced and didn't have to go to jail. I refused to take blood alcohol tests because I knew that if the DWI charges were not reduced, I would go for a jury trial and no jury of 'good old boys' would convict another 'good old boy' for having a couple of drinks and then driving and I always believed that prominent people and people with money would never face DWI charges under the present law."

SENATOR CLARK: You have one minute.

SENATOR STONEY: Well, he continues with that, ladies and gentlemen. I do think that we should give serious consideration to stiffening the penalties in the State of Nebraska to deal with this particular issue and I have circulated and