

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Hefner, followed by Senator Landis.

SENATOR HEFNER: Question.

PRESIDENT: The question has been called.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I object.

PRESIDENT: Object? Okay, there has been an objection. We might let it go on a couple, three more speakers, if you don't mind, Senator Hefner. Senator Landis, then Senator Abboud, then Senator Elmer.

SENATOR LANDIS: Having been placed on the record on this issue, I thought I'd explain why I would oppose 592 because, in part, it really does share some basic assumptions with Senator Chambers' argument. You have to understand that the idea of deterrent, which I hear being passed around here, is really a perspective of a nice, pleasant middle to upper-income perspective from people like ourselves who have a great deal to lose by going to jail, a job to lose, credibility, friends, family. To us, the notion of a jail sentence is anathema, it's the worst, and the idea of spending a long time there is scary and very powerful. But if you're a person who has no job and little prospect of one, is in a community with high unemployment, low job skills and the best of the rest of your life looks to be nothing than more than minimum wage and you've got a chance to make thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars, there is no way the logic of deterrent breaks the attractiveness of selling drugs; which means you catch them, you put them away for life, put them away for 50 years, there will be somebody else. That employment line is the most attractive employment line those people have. And what we do on days like today is pat ourselves on the back and answer with middle class responses which appeal to us but don't understand the mentality that we're trying to change. Now on most days I frankly sit here and do the same thing as you do, we raise the penalties, we bump it a class from a misdemeanor to a felony and think that we've walked away from something. We haven't. What we've done is created a relatively good editorial for ourselves, perhaps a good headline, some good ink and a darn nice line on our reelection campaign brochures. We have not done zip for the drug problem. This, if it's our first line of defense, means