

from arrest to conviction. Statistics further showed that sentencing for the possession of controlled substances across the state, as well as for distribution, ranged from probation to prison time. The statistics came from eight subgrantee programs that were funded by the Drug Policy Board and do not include the state in general or the City of Omaha. Let's just leave the City of Omaha out for a minute. For eight subgrant programs, the total arrests for felony possession and distribution of narcotics totaled 926. Of those that were convicted for cocaine, which there were only nine, eight received prison time with a median sentence of 24 months, one received jail time with a median sentence of three months, and there were three others who received probation with median time of 12 months. The end result was that these subgrantees removed 8.3...or 8.342...8,342.3 grams of cocaine from the street. They seized 14 vehicles, six weapons, and currency with a total value of \$30,256 and made three separate asset forfeitures totaling \$4,500. This is a very small amount in comparison to the entire state's activities. Omaha, alone, as you will hear later, Mr. Joneson says, had approximately 1,600 arrests and removed 33 pounds of cocaine from the streets. The importance of these statistics is that these eight subgrantees are in rural Nebraska. Mr. Joneson goes on to say, the Drug Policy Board supports this bill and sees it as one that heightens the penalty and makes it more costly for those offenders who are possessing and dealing in cocaine and crack. Instead of resorting to generalized penalties, it gets back to the basic, a specific penalty for a specific crime. Again, this is not the complete solution but it is one way to get those who deal in drugs. And, Senator Chambers, I have a question for you.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes.

SENATOR PIRSCH: You made a great deal of how when someone is sentenced...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR PIRSCH: ...even though we say five years it isn't really five years because of good time that's automatically given.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Right.

SENATOR PIRSCH: And is decreased only if you mess up.