

of a matter like this it's very easy for somebody to stand up and say, don't talk about the police like that, now we can get the user. First of all, it is not a crime in this country to use drugs. It is a crime to possess drugs and that is how they get at the person who may or may not be going to sell them, they get you for possessing them. And if a person is under the influence of drugs, they cannot charge that person with possession of drugs because the drugs are incorporated into their system. So even on something as fundamental and elemental as that, some members of the Legislature don't understand what the law is or what is being done.

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: When we have those who don't know trying to enact laws about a subject of which they are profoundly ignorant, we wind up with those mockeries of the law that those who are supposed to be deterred by the law will only laugh at. This is ridiculous. This is nonsensical. And I say again what I said in the beginning, whether you pass the law or not is not going to make that much difference because it's not going to do anything. But it would be a bad thing to do if you're talking about messages because it shows how little the Legislature understands about the nature of the drug problem or what has to be done to confront it. Senator Schmit's bracket motion will allow some time for things to settle down and some recommendations to be made. We could even strip this bill completely by suspending the rules and put into it a program that will really accomplish something but even those who strongly support this bill have to admit that under the sentencing structure that exists right now...

SPEAKER BARRETT: Time.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...a harsher punishment can be offered by a judge than what is called for under this bill. So I don't think we ought to waste time and mislead the public by doing that which really does nothing.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Question.

SPEAKER BARRETT: The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I do. Those in favor of ceasing debate will please vote