

May 4, 1989

LB 813

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And ladies.

PRESIDENT: No, the ladies aren't making any noise. Gentlemen. (Gavel.) Please hold it down so we can hear the speaker. Thank you.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Lieutenant Governor, I see you and I have about as much effect in bringing about peace and quiet as...I won't say it. Senator Hannibal had mentioned when he was talking to Senator Hall...he talked about the gang of four and the Governor, I thought more the Dalton Brothers and Calamity Jane, then when I see how Senator Hall and the Governor are getting together, I think of Bonnie and Clyde. In both cases, the result has not been something that's going to be good for the populace as a whole but that's not what I'm here to talk about this morning. Senator Hall does have a very good amendment here and I can sympathize with what Senator Hannibal said in terms of the amount of work that they did. But they are 9 out of 49 and they established what they felt were priorities based on whatever their orientation happens to be. The rest of us still are at liberty and have an obligation to review the determinations made by the Appropriations Committee and decide if changes are warranted. That's why we don't simply rubber stamp everything they do. It's why, once they make a determination, their determination does not become law with the majority of their votes. There still will have to be a majority vote by the rest of the body. I notice that when we deal with the problems of drugs, because that has been discussed more than alcohol problems this session, the Legislature has responded by talking providing more judges, stiffer prison sentences. Everybody is trying to tailgate and use that as a basis to come in and get money from the Legislature. And none of the responses thus far have gone to dealing with the problem itself, the roots of the problem or trying to help the people who have the problem. Senator Hall's amendment does attempt to move in that direction and I have had more mail on this particular amendment than any other thing that we have considered with reference to any of the budget items this session. If we could set some priorities and show that treatment, rehabilitation are important in our scale of values, then some of these other things won't make the Legislature seem shortsighted and purely political in its orientation, jumping on the band wagon, joining in the hysteria. Everybody is making their reputation off the poor. For example, I know Bob Armstrong personally. He is the head of the OHA. I have a lot of respect for him. I appreciate