

recommendations for changes, improvements or continuations for projects. The board did examine the operation of drug-free school zones which were created with federal assistance and those in other states. After examining the data in other parts of the country as well as in Omaha, the board recommended that the drug-free school zones be made available on a statewide basis and the board legislative committee recommended to create legislation in the drug-free school zones. I became involved as we had seminars across the state this fall and it was very apparent that Mayor Morgan did a good job in promoting and displaying the drug-free zone signs in the City of Omaha which made people aware and all...sent a message not only to the drug dealer who would sell drugs around the places where our children congregate, but also send a message to our children that we care enough that we are going to enhance the penalty and we care enough about them, that we will make it harder and more difficult because we feel that drugs are dangerous. At the present time the dilemma is that the U.S. Attorney's Office has 15 people under indictment for offenses within the 1000-foot zone, and because of the limited resources and because of the limited access of our state to the U.S. Attorney offices and courts, the federal courts, we are asking the passage of LB 976 which will allow local prosecutors in all parts of Nebraska to prosecute offenses which take place within these drug-free zones. LB 976 will be of benefit to all of Nebraska and I point out to you the little pamphlet that I passed around which shows various schools and cities and law enforcement agencies who have written in support of 976 to have this available across the state. With that, I will urge the passage and answer any questions.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. An amendment on the desk.

CLERK: Mr. President, I do. Senator Pirsch, as primary introducer has the right to offer her amendments first. Senator, the first amendment I have is AM2843. It is found on page 1248 of the Journal, Senator. This is the one you had printed earlier in March, 1248.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Pirsch, please.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your indulgence. AM2843 would add a bill that was also heard by the Judiciary Committee which increases the penalty from a Class...from the infraction penalty of marijuana to a