

has got everybody concerned and should and we need to think about where we are at on that issue, but we have had a policy now for a number of years and this is the first time I have seen an effort to change that policy in my 12 years. So the question is how...has the policy failed, how has it failed, how does this address those failures, what age are we talking about, how will this penalty actually have an impact? And that is I think a fundamental question. One way to identify a marijuana problem is convictions. For instance, where are we at in terms of convictions from '79, '80 on up to current times? Are we seeing more convictions? And that may be one indication of whether or not we are having a problem going up or a problem going up and how much time that takes to do those convictions because one of the things I am thinking of is this lower penalty, though it may...

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...not be thought of well, it could also have some advantageous results in terms of time in court and the legal aspect of trying to prosecute, and we need to think about the cost in terms of court time and legal fees and what have you that will be changed as a result of this penalty change, and I just raise that issue about where are we at now in terms of court utilization, and where might we be with this amendment? Also, the question about marijuana usage, most of the people when we are talking about drugs are thinking cocaine, crack, and the different problems there. Marijuana utilization, how often does it lead to those type of drugs. I mean, are we seeing more linkages and gateway type drug into those higher, harder drugs, and that would concern me as well. And the last point I would want to make is the Governor in her State of the State emphasized the drug package, talked about the drug issue, made it the centerpiece of her 1990 legislative package, and I, frankly, did not have one call or one letter that I can identify that is in support of any of the bills that have been introduced. I know the public out there by the opinion polls have indicated their desire to see something happen but they sure have not expressed it to me and perhaps to others in this Legislature as to their desire to see that legislation pass. If it is failing and not succeeding, it may be because the public is not as interested as it might appear. So I am interested about whether or not there is, in fact, the public outcry that some would have us believe there is.