

upper end merit a sentence of life, there is such a tremendous disparity in the amount of punishment allowed that you don't have a single quality of act. You don't have one act which at its mildest end merits one year, and at its most severe end merits life. The spread is too great. The same with the sentence of 5 years to 50 years, or no years to 25 years. The sentencing structure is out of whack in this state. That's why we first need to abolish the death penalty, make life the top punishment for whatever crime, then we can start scaling down and making rational the other kinds of categories of punishment. But that is not what is before us today. Before us today is a bill that is going to cut off rights of appeal to the Supreme Court that people in this state always have had.

SPEAKER BAACK: Time.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: A sentence of 10 years to life should justify an appeal to the Supreme Court.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Before we go to the next speaker, I would like to introduce some guests of the Legislature. First of all we have two guests of Senator Lamb, and they are under the north balcony. We have Don and Shirley Steinacher from Omaha. Would you folks please stand and be welcomed by the Legislature. Thank you for being with us. We also have some guests of Senator Robak who are in the south balcony. They are 16 eighth graders from Humphrey St. Francis School in Eumfrey, Nebraska, with their teacher. Would you folks please stand and be welcomed by the Legislature. Thank you for being with us. Senator Schmit, you are the next speaker. I don't see Senator Schmit. We'll go to Senator Ashford.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. Last year when this...the constitutional amendment was first discussed, there were two issues that I was concerned with. One was the issue of making certain that the court sit in areas other than Lincoln, and that it be accessible to litigants and attorneys across the state. And Senator Wickersham's amendment has, to a certain degree, dealt with that problem, at least it has given some legislative intent to the Supreme Court to look at sitting in areas other than...in locations other than Lincoln. So to some extent that answers my first concern. The second concern that I had with the bill is the concern that Senator Chambers has raised today. I think it's...there was an amendment that I