

above \$1,000 it's a Class III felony. And all throughout the years, until this point in time, with maybe one exception, we have kept to the principle that the value of the property stolen is what should regulate whether it's a misdemeanor, what class of misdemeanor, whether it's a felony, what class of felony. But I'm striking Section 1 of this bill, I would strike Section 1 of this bill because it says regardless of value, one particular type of property, livestock, is going to be treated differently from all other types of property. Livestock is defined in 54-101. It's not just a calf, but it could be a small pig, or a small sheep, it's five or six different types of farm animals. And I suggest to you that if you allow this kind of process to begin and to take place what will slowly happen is that other people will see other reasons why particular categories of property, their property always, of course, every occupation, every...every economic group thinks that their property is more important than other peoples' property. Pretty soon you'll have somebody that, for example, breeds expensive dogs will come in and suggest that the stealing of a puppy, regardless of value, should be a felony offense instead of the misdemeanor that it might otherwise be, simply because it doesn't reach the value of \$100 or the value of \$300. And on and on you can go, imagining little distinctions that are little differences that are not real distinctions. The real matter to be considered and the way we keep the criminal statutes somewhat equitable in terms of who we apply it to, and who it protects, is to keep offenses related in accordance with their value and not simply because it's a certain type of property to treat it differently, to enhance the penalty on it for no particular reason. I hope that I've made it clear that I'm not picking on livestock because it's from the country, or a rural kind of property. I would say the very same thing about anybody who proposed that construction site materials, for example, should be treated differently, or whatever in the city. I hope I've made the point clear to you, would ask that it be brought back.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Beutler. I'll now recognize Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Madam Speaker, very brief. Senator Beutler has explained it very well. And I, too, have those same concerns. Who says the value of that pig or that pup, or maybe stealing of livestock is very hard, even to be definite in who and who didn't do it. And sometimes two and three people involved in this. And I truly believe that Senator Beutler is right, we