

and was not overridden. It has not been an issue that has had much of an opportunity to be passed since that point but it continues to be an issue pressing upon the consciences and the attention of the majority of people in this state and this nation. It is an issue that grips us as we try to discuss it in a way in which very issues affect individuals. It is an issue that has many different perspectives brought to it. As you talk about the application of the death penalty, you have different viewpoints. You have the viewpoint of the victim. You have the viewpoint of the victim's family of an individual who has had a loss of life, has a family left behind who have very strong feelings. You have the perpetrator, you have the perpetrator's family. You have the public and their viewpoint about the application of the death penalty in certain cases. And you have very different viewpoints that have different feelings attached to those. In addition, as legislators, we have different views. We have the view of that role of representing the people in our district, of representing public opinion, and if we take that viewpoint clearly, a majority of citizens in this state and this nation support the death penalty and understandably so. There's a great deal of concern about crime. There's a great deal of fear. There is a great deal of emotion. The other viewpoint is one which you assess your own conscience, your own feelings, your own experiences to make a judgment that you feel is in the best interest of the public and it is a classic argument of what role, what perspective we, as legislators, as elected officials, choose to make that has dominated us throughout history. Which way do we look at it? From the public's view that we are elected to represent? Perhaps from a different view and our personal perspective. And from that personal perspective, I look at this issue and see a number of things. First, the argument is made that the death penalty should not be applied because it is immoral. That is a difficult judgment to make based again on personal philosophy. I think there is a strong case to be made either way on that. Another viewpoint is the death penalty is impractical. The appeals continue to make it something that has never been used now for 20, 30 years. It is not something that is practical. The death penalty is abused. And on that point, we've seen other nations that have the death penalty still in place. Developed nations, primarily, do not have the death penalty. Those that are developing, those that are dominated by dictators and repression seem to have a death penalty, and those that are more enlightened do not. And the potential for abuse is always there, despite the judicial branch of government we have, we must be ever cognizant of it. Another