

violation of environmental law would be six months and that's what the committee amendment does. It says it will be six months, not up to five years. And that's all that the committee amendment does. I'd be happy to answer any questions if there are any.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Speaker Baack. Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Madam Speaker, I concur with Senator Baack and now that I reread and I remember specifically my question to Senator Baack in the hearing, if he felt that this was necessary. He pointed out that it was and I simply concur with Senator Baack. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Nelson. Senator Elmer.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Madam President. Senator Baack, we've had this type of proposal before the Natural Resources Committee over the last couple of years and many of the fines that the EPA and Occupational Safety Hazard Act and those kinds of things are very large and it's quite easy in a small business that handles some toxic materials such as chemicals and things like that to have inadvertent types of spills and come in and be fined in excess of that kind of money that would become a felony. And many law abiding citizens, thinking that they are law abiding, would become felons under this thing. Would you care to address that a little bit?

PRESIDENT MOUL: Speaker Baack.

SPEAKER BAACK: Yes, Senator Elmer, I would. I think that in my opinion, if we do have violations of our environmental laws and the things that we have in place right now, the fines and the things that we have in place right now fit for a felony violation rather than they do for a misdemeanor violation and I think that the violations of our environmental law ought to be a felony kind of violations. I think they are that serious where they ought to be of that kind of violation. It also puts in place a standard of intent of willful and knowingly and it puts that standard of intent also in there, so that clarifies that it has to be willfully and knowingly before they would be charged with a Class IV felony.

SENATOR ELMER: Okay. Let me give you some examples of some things that are happening, in the fines being levied getting