

many cases and helping to apprehend in the police work, it was appropriate to do something more for their protection. There was a bill brought previously two years ago that I'm not intensely familiar with. This is not that bill. This simply elevates the punishment for harassing or harming a dog in the performance of duty or a horse, so that they can be adequately protected. It creates the offense of harassment of a police animal. If an individual intentionally teases or harasses a police animal in order to distract, agitate or harm the police animal which is a Class IV demeanor, misdemeanor, unless the harassment results in the death of the police animal in which case is a Class IV felony. So I passed out a point comparing where the current law is to what this proposal is as amended by the committee and I would urge your consideration of this. You probably have seen several articles in the papers over time about the importance of the dogs and police, and especially dogs in police work and I would urge your consideration of this bill.

**SPEAKER WITHEM:** Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. Any discussion on the bill? There is an amendment, Mr. Clerk.

**ASSISTANT CLERK:** Senator Beutler would move to amend. AM2280 appears on page 2289 of the Legislative Journal.)

**SPEAKER WITHEM:** Senator Beutler.

**SENATOR BEUTLER:** Senator Withem, members of the Legislature, this amendment is very easy to follow. I'm very much in favor of this bill in terms of providing some additional protection for police dogs, but there was one part of the bill that appeared to me to go in the opposite direction potentially and I'm putting up the amendment to hear a discussion and to get a further explanation. But that portion of the bill that would tend to protect police dogs less actually would be the new language in lines 15 and 16 of page 4. The amendment strikes the new language on page 15 and 16 of page 4. What that language relates to is the cruelty to animals provision of the law which of course prohibits cruelly mistreating or cruelly neglecting an animal and provides a penalty as recited for you by Senator Wehrbein. And then in the particular section that I'm concerned with, it sets out exceptions to the cruelty to animals provision, certain cases that are defined there that will not be cruelty to animals and what the bill purported to do was to add a new, to add new language that would say that the care or treatment of a police dog by a police enforcement