

junkies to come by and they buy...they buy the drugs, and then when they go down the street they are arrested because they participated in a drug transaction. This is a junkie buying drugs for his or her habit, and that's how they get these huge statistics, and they arrest all of these people in Lancaster County and Douglas County. Periodically, you will see all of these articles about all of these people arrested on drugs, but why is no dent put in the traffic? Because they are not touching the ones who really control the trade. What my amendment is designed to do is to bring a degree of rationality, and by the way, I hope the camera doesn't show that the Chamber is virtually empty. I am talking to the people out in the audience who are watching us.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS PRESIDING

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I said virtually, Senator Jensen, that doesn't mean completely. Because the members of the Legislature are not really following what we are doing on this bill, but there are some people on the outside who are concerned. They are asking the same kind of questions and are dealing with the same kind of issues that I'm trying to get us to address here today. If we don't adopt this amendment that I am offering, what you will do, based on the way I have observed the operations of the criminal justice system in this state, is to keep in place the harsh punishment for black people who use crack, but for the white people who use powder, plea bargains will be reached, the prosecutor will not charge the person, and in some cases, because of where this powder cocaine is used, there won't even be any arrests made. So I think what we ought to do since the disparity arose by irrationally raising...

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Time.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...the punishment level...did you give me my one minute warning.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Yes, sir, right when you were chastising the members for not listening. Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Abboud.

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President, colleagues, I looked at...I have been trying to follow Senator Chambers' amendment. It is