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We will continue with the discussion with Senator Dwite Pedersen.

SENATOR Dw. PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor and members of the Legislature. I wanted to talk yesterday, and I thought I need to think about this. I was going to wait till after the Bruning amendment had been taken care of, and I thought, no, Dwite, it's about time you get up and tell a little bit how you feel on this bill. I've been in the Judiciary Committee for seven years. I've been in the Legislature for seven years. I'm 57 years old and I can remember lots of tragedies in my lifetime. I've been a supporter of the death penalty because I've always said and believed that there needs to be an ultimate penalty for an ultimate crime. However, and most of you know that I do a lot of volunteer work by visiting prisoners in the prison system. In the last few years, one of the things that came to me was that I would never visit death row because I didn't believe that that was a place where I belonged, and I didn't want to get involved with those people who had committed them terrible, terrible, serious crimes. But the fact of it is I was talking and visiting with many people who committed, a lot of times, more terrible crimes than those people on death row, and they were serving life sentences. Some were serving less than life sentences because the courts and the prosecutors and our system got them reduced to second degree murder, and yet we had a few on death row. I'm older than most in this room, but not as old as some, or just as old. I don't know where I'm at exactly, as Senator Schimek is looking at me here, but I know this, I remember when Charlie Starkweather was on his rampage in the state of Nebraska, and he came close to the border of South Dakota, where my home was, Winner. And our parents took us in at night, and would not let us go out in the evenings because this man was on the rampage. People were scared to death and most of you remember John Joubert and the Joubert cases in Sarpy County. The helicopters, the law officers, the warnings we had on radio and television what to do with our children. Our children were small at that time. People were scared. But as I look back, what the people really wanted was to feel safe, and what is safeness? Safeness is to make sure this person does not hurt anybody anymore. We have a system today that does that, can lock them up and keep them without ever leaving them out, and I'm looking at that. I, too,