

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

January 24, 2000 LB 509

those years, some are opposed to changing it just because they are opposed to change. So in addition to leaving felony murder as a form of first degree murder and creating the punishment of life without possibility of parole, it would add three additional felonies to the felony murder rule. Because these particular crimes are not on the list, a person could commit them and not be found guilty of anything more than manslaughter because it would be death during the commission of an unlawful act. So if a person is criminally abusing a child and the child dies, that is not felony murder, although if somebody breaks in your house and accidentally kills somebody, that is. So committing a deliberate act against a child which results in death is not felony murder. Sexual assault on a child or of a child is a specific offense. But it is not subject to the felony murder rule, and that's why a man who was raping a little girl and suffocated her could not be charged with felony murder. And that's what Senator Matzke and Senator Bruning want to keep in place, while saying they're tough on law...on crime. And these county attorneys are in a frenzy. They don't care that these offenses cannot be prosecuted as felony murder nor false imprisonment, where you may apply force to keep...this is different from kidnapping, because you may have a person already at a certain location and you don't transport them, but you hold them there against their will. And let's say you use such force that you break the neck of that person. That cannot be prosecuted as felony murder. When this man, in that packet of cases that I handed out to you, was chasing this woman down the street and she was screaming for her life, and he had beaten her, and she fell and he stood over her and shot her twice in the back of the head, that was not felony murder,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...and he did not get the death sentence either. And you can read those other cases for yourself. They were not felony murder. This kid, Catenacci, who was stabbed over 50 times, and the murder was premeditated, which is what the sentencing panel said, no death penalty was handed out because the sentencing panel said it did not rise to a level of sufficient heinousness. So premeditatedly stabbing a person more than 57 times gets no death penalty, but an unintentional killing, under felony murder, can get a death sentence. I hope