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SPEAKER BROMM: Senator Beutler, you're recognized to open on your amendment.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, this amendment goes to that portion of the bill that empowers probation officers to impose administrative sanctions. And as has been discussed a number of times, both on General File and this time around, it has been noted that probation officers are given very substantial new powers under this bill, and there is less reliance upon judges and the more formal aspects of the judicial system. And those powers are designed to hold the probationer accountable for substance abuse, and for noncriminal violations of conditions of probation. The noncriminal violations is a broad cross section of probationer activities and behaviors. And the substance abuse violations is also broad. And the powers given to the probation officer are fairly substantial for such a relatively...I don't want to say a low person, but for a probation officer level of bureaucracy. Usually in this situation it is the judge and the judicial system that is the reference point and the checkpoint and the person who must approve what the probation officer does. And I think the design of the bill is to get away from that going back to the court system each time. But for the protection of the probationer, it seems to me that there ought to be somebody else at least potentially involved in the decision making, and that it would be very easy for the probation officer in these instances where they sought to exercise administrative sanctions to simply confer with their chief probation officer. And if there's a high level of trust there, like there is in Douglas County, then the chief probation officer could simply sign off on it as the judge does these days. Or, if there's not such a high level of trust, then there could be a short conference between the chief probation officer and the probation officer. In any event, it reinserts into the system a double-check, albeit an easier one, and something that doesn't take up the time of a judge. But I think it does have the advantage of continuing to have in the system the double-check over the actions of a probation officer. Obviously, 90 percent of the time, you don't need that double-check. But it is a situation where there's the potential for abuse, and it seemed to me that