

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

March 29, 2006 LB 925

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: And Senator Friend, one...in my days as a probation officer, this is one of the most difficult populations to work with, and I very much appreciate you bringing this bill, but one of the tools from a recovery standpoint, from a treatment standpoint, from a probation officer's standpoint, one of the tools, I guess, we had, which is embedded in statute, is the threat of an individual to lose to their license for 15 years. And what that did in many instances was instigate and motivate these individuals initiating a very stringent treatment program, with Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, and quite frankly, it was coerced treatment. It was so that they could hold onto their driver's license. As you probably know, it's an integral thing to have, a driver's license, in terms of being a productive citizen in our society. And what that threat of that 15-year license suspension did was motivate and instigate individuals getting into a treatment program--residential treatment, outpatient treatment, aftercare, engaging in Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, and really taking a look at themselves. And in many instances, many individuals found recovery. And at the beginning, it was just simply to avoid losing their license, but once they became engaged in the recovery process, it was successful. My one little concern with the bill is that we will lose that tool in the toolbox. We will lose that motivating factor of that 15-year license suspension. I was just curious to see if that aspect of it was at all discussed in the committee, or in you undertaking to draft the bill.

SENATOR FRIEND: Well, thank you, Senator Synowiecki, and maybe I misspoke earlier, because it...the committee amendment, compared to current law...current law, if a penalty is given...penalty, if given probation or suspended sentence on a third offense at .08 is a one-year license revocation, \$600 fine, and 10 days in jail, or 480 hours of community service. With the committee amendment, we've got a 15-year license revocation. So Senator, I'm not really...maybe I answered you incorrectly the first time, but we're not...I don't think we're pulling back from that type of approach to dealing with those offenders at that degree, at that level.