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same thing? Is the gunning down of a member of the Legislature not exactly the same thing? We are representatives of society, but this doesn't extent to us.

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR LANDIS: At the heart of this is the problem of using the victim as the way of distinguishing what penalty you give. It is the nature of the crime itself, and the taking of the life is the essence of the crime, not the nature of the victim. We have far too many attempts now to change our criminal law, to make higher penalty because you're elderly, or higher penalties because you're young, or higher penalties because of the right or wrong gender, or race. It's the problem with hate crimes legislation. Assaults are assaults are assaults. Murders are murders are murders are murders. And that's what's wrong with them, and that's why they should be punished, not because the victim should have a higher or lower standard of protection from society. Murder is what's wrong. And they're all wrong, not by the victim, but by the act of taking a life. That's the problem with LB 422.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Landis. Senator Bromm.

SENATOR BROMM: Thank you, Madam President. And I was going to call the question, but I decided not to. Senator Landis gave a very eloquent argument, and I respect that. And I think he has added...he has focused on the issue that we need to look at in whether or not you pass this bill or whether you don't. That is the real issue. What we've been dealing with up until that point is a lot of talk about the death penalty and about the aggravating circumstances and the peculiarities of that. But Senator Landis has hit the nail on the head. And if you look at this bill as a bill that puts more value on a police officer's life than the store clerk in Cozad, or the baby that gets killed, then you shouldn't pass the bill. That's not my intention. That's not...I don't think it's Senator Matzke's intention, I know it isn't, he said that yesterday at least once. That is not the purpose of the bill. A law enforcement officer is the one person, the one position that stands between the society of law and order, the democracy that Senator Landis speaks about, and the perpetrator, the person who disregards