

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

June 4, 1997

LB 364

number of policies that are resulting in consequences from which we may not be deriving sufficient benefit, i.e., we may be incarcerating 60 percent of 1,178 inmates for longer than we reasonably believe is necessary for the good of society. And it may cost the taxpayers millions and millions of dollars. It may require the hiring of more and more employees to administer more and more prison facilities. And there is no question that the citizenry wants to be protected and maintained safe. But we do need to occasionally ask them, at what price? Now specifically so...and Senator Witek is right in terms of talking about this having come together as a series, an ongoing series of discussions over time and she understands that so all questions are legitimate. But I want to get a little more specific. I don't think we should be talking about a single case and that's a point of view, but it makes sort of an ad hominem argument. Let's talk about the situation which she has brought to the floor with the handout entitled "Accessory Deserves Full Sentence." First of all, this is not as despicable as you may consider this act to be or the participation in this act. This wasn't the person who killed Officer Wilson. That's number one. Number two, this is a plea bargain and anybody who knows anything about it knows that it was a plea bargain in order to educe testimony necessary to the prosecution. It is not correct to say that at the end, and I checked this privately because I'm not trying to be personal with Senator Witek. It's not correct to say...

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: ...that after 11 months of incarceration that at sentencing the person could have gone free. That is not what the policy would be for these serious felonies that we would leave in Class IV. It would be one-third of five years. That is more than 20 months so it's not true that somebody could have gone free at 11 months, and I don't think we should have that kind of a mischaracterization. We cannot get into in establishing these basic parameters, we can't get into how it's all going to be applied by the prosecutors, by the courts. We establish the parameters, we establish the policy. The prosecutors prosecute and the courts sentence. Thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Brashear. Senator Will