

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I hope you will give very serious consideration to this bill because this bill is an example of the type of problem that we have time after time in the Legislature because of what I call the model bill syndrome. And these organizations that hang out in Washington and represent groups of this or groups of that always need something to do, of course, and one of the things they do are propose model bills which they purport to be applicable to every state in the Union. And the problem is they are not applicable to every state in the Union. Unless you do a great deal of work on each one, you have a piece of trash. And I think that basically, and I am talking about the green copy of the bill, that this bill is in very bad condition and does a lot more harm than it does good. Two years ago, three years ago, the City of Lincoln had a problem with losing library materials and I examined that situation because I was interested in what could be done in the Legislature to alleviate the situation. And when that situation was examined and I submit to you that that situation is the same as the situation across the state, the problem did not have to do with the laws of this state. It definitely did not have to do with the laws of this state. We have adequate laws in this state to deal with the theft of library materials. The problem had to do with two things. It had to do with the fact that city prosecutors and county attorneys are not willing to prosecute and go through the rigamarole of prosecution for the collection of a small amount of money, in their opinion. So we passed a law...you may remember that we passed a law a couple years ago that made a couple of changes, and one of the important changes that were made was that county attorneys and city prosecutors could charge fees, attorney's fees and court cost against people who were found guilty of theft of the library materials. So we solved that problem or we sought to solve that problem. You can't solve it entirely. These county attorneys are independently elected county attorneys and if they are not going to prosecute, they are not going to prosecute. But making another law for them to prosecute is not going to help the situation at all. But the most important problem is simply this. Library people see themselves in the business of getting out as much library material to people as possible and that is a very positive