

(start belt #5)

and I do give an answer of sorts. Three years ago, I sponsored this bill. Two years ago I sponsored it, only that time when I sponsored it, I asked the other members of the committee to put their names on the bill because I thought the bill would have more strength and would have a greater chance of passing in the Legislature. In the three years that I have been here, I suppose that I have devoted more time to this particular piece of legislation than probably almost all the others combined. And quite frankly, in the three years that I have worked on it and studied it, I have had some changes of opinion. And the changes of opinion have been simply that maybe the thing the bill tries to accomplish can not actually be done by human beings. The theory behind the bill is that we have a large number of alcoholics possibly 10 million in this country and that the government is going to solve the problem of alcoholism by setting up a program and an agency and a number of people who will take the alcoholic, the person who has an alcoholic problem, and against his will so to speak, cure him. Now in the various hearings and testimony that we had on the bill, we learned that every department of state that would have any interest or concern in this bill had their own theories and their ideas as to how it should be run but each of them ended up with the same conclusion which was simply that they should run it, that it should be a massive program involving millions of dollars and a very large state agency, new state agency, new branch of government almost so to speak and I just don't think that as the bill now stands that any conclusion will be reached on this floor that will support one particular form or program. I think it was Jeremy Bentham, the philosopher, many years ago who said one day that the ultimate result of protecting people from their own foolishness is to create a world of fools. Now I am all for helping the alcoholic, I am all for rehabilitation and as I stated here, I sponsored this bill so in effect I made the motion when I killed it to kill my own bill, but I don't think that you can force a cure onto somebody who doesn't want to be cured. I think that if we go in with a less big plan you might say than LB127 now encompasses, that it might have a lot of good effects, but the idea of setting up a whole big agency with a lot of people and all the other things that 127 now encompasses and that those who are supporting it seem to feel that it must have, I don't think that is the answer. If 127 could be amended into such form that it would be a beginning program that did not involve vast expenditures and that did offer treatment to the alcoholic that was really seeking it, then I could see this bill as to having some merit, but at this time, and on the basis of the testimony that was offered and the various groups that are supporting it, I don't think that is the direction that 127 will take and so recognizing that, I made the motion to kill it and I think possibly in the interim and I hate to use this word, study, because I know that it is an excuse so frequently for not taking action but I believe in the interim this committee has now seen all sides and all facets of this problem, and they will come up with something that is more realistic than LB127 or any of the amendments to LB127 have been.

PRESIDENT: Senator Stahmer, back to you.

SENATOR STAHMER: Well Mr. President, now that I heard the explanation I just had a vision from heaven or someplace. Me thinks the former liberal senator, the one favoring this bill is now had some future thoughts and I support Senator Carpenter 100% in bringing this bill out on the floor.

PRESIDENT: Next to speak is Senator Nore, then Richard Lewis, Chambers and then Kelly, then Luedtke. Motion is just to introduce the bill notwithstanding the action of the committee.