

January 22, 1992 LB 522

understand why a bill like this might be contemplated. I can understand why it might be of value to have it discussed by the Legislature. But I think it would be totally inappropriate for us to enact a bill of this kind. It has already been touched on the number of other types of occupations and professions that deal with young people, yet they are not being singled out. I collect articles related to child abuse. Senator Schmit touched on this. I have a number of articles where people involved with the boy scouts have been convicted of crimes against children or have entered pleas or have made settlements out of court, if it reached the level of a civil action. I have articles where priests, preachers, and others who wear religious labels have been convicted of crimes against children, yet none of them will be attacked in this fashion and this is an attack. A presumption is being stated by the Legislature that whoever attempts after a certain date to become a certified teacher is likely to be a criminal, a criminal who has committed crimes of the nature that makes that person a threat to commit such crimes in his or her capacity as a teacher. That is a presumption...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...I think the Legislature should not make by way of legislation. A bill like this may have a certain allure but now that there has been the kind of discussion that has taken place thus far, we can see the problems with it, the wrongfulness of singling out one group which could really start a domino effect, this bill will not pass. Teachers do, in most people's opinion, hold a certain status that is worthy of honor. If an honorable profession can require members to undergo this criminal background check, then certainly every profession, every endeavor below that profession can be required to do the same thing. There comes a steady eroding of the privileges, the immunities, the civil liberties of citizens of this country and this state. This bill is not necessary. I don't think a compelling case towards adoption has been presented to us. I intend...

SPEAKER BAACK. Time.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...to vote against it.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Ashford, you're next.