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LB 845

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, this issue is very serious from where I sit. Not only do I want to talk about, briefly, the contents of the bill, LB 845, which was unceremoniously killed by the Banking Committee, I wanted to make comments about what that action demonstrates about the attitude being taken toward, not only female senators, but women, in general, by the majority of legislators this session. I think it is a very unwise, very insensitive thing to do as the members of the Banking Committee did. We know that any committee can conduct its business any way that it chooses. We are all adults and we know that the way we conduct our business can be criticized. And for them to take an issue which is of such pressing importance to females, and have such heavy symbolic meaning, and to kill it almost before those who presented it as sponsors and cosponsors of the legislation, and those who testified in favor of it, to scarcely give them time to leave the room before killing it is inexcusable, in my opinion. It is outrageous. It shows a disdainful, dismissive attitude toward women. But that attitude is not surprising, especially when you have an all-male committee, though I must say I was surprised by at least one of the votes, maybe two. I look at the way women have been treated throughout history. This morning there was a man praying, and I guess he based what his prayer contained on the Bible. The Bible was written by men, in most instances. Four things I can divine in the Bible as being branded unclean, branded unclean: certain beasts, certain wicked spirits, lepers, and women, during that time of the month, as it is called. But if a man had raped a woman, as some did during the bible time, those men were not labeled unclean. The women were labeled unclean, and that attitude comes down to us today. Hundreds of thousands of women, Senator Cudaback, were burned at the stake, others were hanged, others cruelly tortured before being burned at the stake as witches, again, under the directorship of men. I handed out a packet of information to show you that this very barbaric, backward attitude even infects men on the continent of my origin, namely Africa, and specifically in the country of Kenya where young girls, as young as 9-years old are sold to grown men, supposedly as wives. They are viewed as resources because the father can be given cattle, beer, other things that are deemed of value in exchange for this child. And these men do not want those young girls or young women to be educated because of the fear that