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FLOOR DEBATE

April 3, 2001 LB 230, 668

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Hilgert, you are recognized to open on your amendment, AM1182, to LB 668.

SENATOR HILGERT: Thank you, Mr. President, members. This is the amendment that I had told you about on General File regarding LB 668. This re...is regarding the lead remediation certificate costs. This came out...this is essentially LB 230, if you want to look on the gadgets. It's a very simple bill. There was no opponents, there was no neutral, only proponents. It was advanced out of committee unanimously. And all that it does is it changes the fee charged by the Department of Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure under the Residential Lead-Based Professional Certification Act. Right now the fees are \$2,000 to \$5,000. The reason that those...that range was picked is because when we passed LB 863, back in 1999, we basically left the asbestos language and used it for lead; turns out that they don't need to be that high, it doesn't need to be \$2,000 to \$5,000, and this bill would lower it to \$200 to \$500. Now the reason we want to...and again, there was no opposition; the department didn't oppose it as well. The reason that I brought this before you and the reason why I want to lower the fee is because the city of Omaha has a \$2 million grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, and it was discovered that one of the requirements of the grant were specifications that the city utilize small, independent contractors in abatement projects. Well, when the licensure fee is \$5,000, there's not going to be a lot of small providers that are going to avail themselves of this, and consequently the city of Omaha has this \$2 million grant sitting out there and with no one...providers, remediators, independent contractors willing to participate in it because the fees are too high. So we're just trying to make government work here. I handed out a letter from Councilman Frank Brown of the city of Omaha of support for the...for the bill, as well as Paul Koneck. These two council members are from east Omaha, represent east Omaha. They have a special interest in the bill. Again, this is what I talked about on General File that I was going to attempt to do. No one had contacted me in the meantime so, if anyone has any questions at this point, I would be happy to try to answer them. With that, I would just encourage the adoption