

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

March 8, 2005

LB 105, 471

SENATOR CUDABACK: LB 471 does advance. Mr. Clerk, LB 105.

CLERK: LB 105, by Senator Chambers. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 6, referred to the Judiciary Committee, advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Chambers, to open on advancement of LB 105.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. Mr. President, members of the Legislature, the Nebraska Supreme Court and the State Bar Association have put together a committee that would study issues of gender, race, and other matters that might lead to disparate treatment in the judicial system of various individuals and groups. In order to get the information that's needed so that they can look at all aspects of the system, the committee wants to be able to get information related to these jury lists. This information currently is not available to anybody. This bill would have the following language, and I will read it because I want it in the record: "Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section," which makes this information off-limits, "the Supreme Court or an agent of the Supreme Court acting under the direction and supervision of the Chief Justice shall have access to juror qualification forms for research purposes. The Supreme Court and its agent shall treat such information as confidential, and nothing identifying any individual shall be released." This information will be obtained by the Supreme Court or its designated agent for research purposes only. Nothing that would identify any individual who had gone through this process of being qualified as a juror will be utilized. So I'm asking that you advance this bill, and strike a blow for justice, fairness, equality. Sometimes that blinder that's over the Statue of Justice's face will lift up a little bit, and the court will look at who is standing before it. A person's status, whether political, racial, sexual, sexual orientation, or any of a number of other inconsequential factors may be taken into consideration, and will result in a skewed decision. That decision will be skewed because a court should render a judgment, a jury should reach a