

March 6, 1979

LB 59

be recognized please? Now we are back to the Koch amendment. Senator Maresh. Senator Lamb, did you want to speak to the Koch amendment?

SENATOR LAMB: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I rise to oppose the Koch amendment. I agree with the remarks of Senator Chambers that if someone is let out of this bill it should be open to all the parents, that the definition of an established church is difficult to determine and that if you leave this language in the bill, I really don't believe it makes much sense and it is discriminatory. I urge you to reject the Koch amendment.

SENATOR NICHOL: There are no other lights on. Senator Koch, would you like to close?

SENATOR KOCH: Mr. Chairman, members of the body, this Legislature historically has been making this provision in its legislation and it would appear to me that if today we are about to take this step where we are going to ignore the religious belief of what we feel are established bona fide churches, then we are taking a step that is going to be counterproductive to what we have been doing historically. The first time that I ever ran into this was when I first came to this Legislature several years ago when I had a bill dealing with the issue of rubella and I was requested to place that amendment on this particular piece of legislation and they advised me that that was historical. So I proceeded to do that. Now this morning we are going to play around. I don't doubt Senator Chambers' sincerity. I know his position and his philosophy. But I am somewhat concerned about what I have observed here by other votes on the Board, because the same people who voted for the same provision in LB 45, a bill I had a year ago, today are diametrically going against what they voted for a year ago where we did recognize particularly the Christian Science faith as the one that we generally speak to on this issue. So, therefore, we are now saying that the individual because of religious tenets can opt out of the immunization procedure. If we are going to be honest, then possibly this whole amendment should not be placed in here and just plain say to the church, the Christian Science people, and I know them, I have some good friends who believe in this kind of religion and I respect them for it because I have coached some of those young men who endeavor to live with pain or who could live with it, and I believe that they have a right to this particular amendment. Therefore, I ask you to adopt what still remains of the original amendment. Thank you.

1207