

January 14, 1980

LB 382

people of Nebraska, endorse its use and we endorse its validity. It think we had better be careful about sending those kinds of messages to the people of Nebraska. I cannot buy the argument that some laetrile promoters feed us that there is a conspiracy in this country by the medical community to deny Americans of the gift of life. I cannot believe that our institutions are hiding a cure for cancer. I cannot believe that the federal government would deny us a cure for cancer. But aside from the debate on the effectiveness of apricot pits in treating cancer, we should consider other factors. In my mind the most serious consequence is the endorsement of laetrile by the State of Nebraska and the benefit that is to the promoters. I would ask you to analyze the handout which I gave you and look particularly at the advertisements in that handout. A hundred percent guarantee of no cancer if you simply start laetrile today and you are healthy. You also hear from laetrile promoters that they don't want to have laetrile patients, the people who use laetrile abandon conventional therapies but look at the advertisements that I have distributed to you. Look at the facts. The facts are that they do discourage people from using conventional treatments. Cut, burn and so forth, they are trying to scare people and they are trying to scare them into using laetrile because there is money in it, in some cases \$2000 for two weeks treatment with laetrile. There is an additional reason that I believe should be mentioned as far as laetrile is concerned and that is insurance. If you would have attended the public hearing on LB 382, you would have heard testimony from people who said that one reason they want the bill passed and one major reason they want the bill passed is because then insurance companies will pay for laetrile. I question the wisdom of encouraging insurance companies to pay for a substance which scientifically and medically has no value in treating cancer and I wonder what that is going to do with health care costs for those of you who are concerned about it. Insurance coverage is also going to encourage additional people to use laetrile because they know that they can get it paid for and they have some faith in the insurance companies and believe that they are going to...the insurance companies would not pay for a treatment that was totally worthless. So I think we have to consider that. Oftentimes you hear the concept of freedom of choice and I think we need to address that. Freedom of choice is a very attractive argument but I think the right of certain persons to buy and use a product must be balanced against the right of the many for protection against being cheated, defrauded and abused. How ironic it would be if this Legis-

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