

January 14, 1980

LB 382

he or she is dying but the truth is that we are making advances every day in cancer research. The truth is that laetrile is not effective. I think it is considerably more cruel than to tell someone that they are dying to give them false hope, to tell them that laetrile which scientists and the doctors tell us does not work, does work and then to charge them fees for selling them laetrile. That is cruel and I urge you to join me in indefinitely postponing LB 382.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Koch.

SENATOR KOCH: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, this is now approximately six or seven hours or more that we have spent considerable time discussing the merit of a supposed valued drug. I would remind this body that a number of years ago one of the most scientific countries in this world brought forth in this nation a drug that was supposed to solve a great number of problems. The FDA approved that drug. It later turned out to be one of the worst drugs ever administered to human beings, thalidomide, but everyone thought it was a wonder drug. In fact it was a drug which caused defects that were horrendous and death. I don't always agree with the FDA but I have to accept their mission and role. Their role is to test every drug and place it before the public for consumption, treatment of certain kinds of diseases, and for the new members of this body who have received hundreds of letters like I have over the past couple of years, I submit to you the place to go for your advice is to medical research and not to emotions. We are spending millions of dollars and billions of dollars in this country in an effort to find a cure for all kinds of different cancers, and in many cases, we have been successful, and I have members of my family who have recovered or who are enjoying the best life available under medical procedures available and those are immediate members including very close members. I am not going to submit to them that laetrile will cure them even though they probably have read and are of considerable age. They are willing to accept the best medical treatment available even though at some times it is difficult. And as a member of this body, I will not submit myself under the name of Freedom of Choice to make a decision which I do not believe is the right choice for most people. I cannot be a party to that kind of emotion. Our duty here as Senators is to make decisions based upon the best research available. In my district which is composed of a great number of doctors, my advice is this is not proper legislation. They are not talking about liability or anything

5954