

those existing buildings that we need to develop some alternatives that will provide for more safety than they now have, and again I emphasize, we are not talking about ripping up older high rises and putting in sprinkler systems. What the intent here is is that if that is an unreasonable too costly an item, well, they have choices and the choices are listed for you in the bill. For instance, they could develop areas of refuge as one item, for instance, where they could have an area that could be sealed off in the event of a fire for say twenty minutes and protect people so that in about that amount of time the fire department would have a chance to put out the fire, at least put it out enough so that they could get somebody up there to help these people. That would be a less costly alternative. They could look at a smoke detection system. Senator Cope had the smoke detector bill. This would expand on that and insure that smoke detectors would be available that would be helpful to alert people to a problem. Alarm communication central control systems that would communicate with people if there is a problem. Fire safety features for elevators. Emergency standby power and light systems and a number of other items are listed. But clearly there are some choices that are not all that costly to existing buildings that the Fire Marshal would look at and try and come up with the least costly, most effective means to insure safety for the residents of that high rise. The Fire Marshal, I think, is going to be very reasonable in developing these rules and regulations and I think that the mandate that is called for in LB 266 is appropriate. I have gotten a lot of support for this bill. If you look at the handout I have, you will have a handout that lists some of those groups that have appeared at the hearing on this bill and testified in support. They include a wide range of interest, including owners and managers of existing high rises who have recognized the need to improve on their safety and have supported the bill. I think you will also see a letter from the Notifier Company which talks about how important it is to have a little more restrictive requirements for high rises because they do pose a much greater danger for fires than any other alternative and I have an office on the eighth floor of this building and I know what the prospect is of potentially having a fire in a high rise where I might be located and it is a scary thought. It is one that I think we shouldn't have to have people in fear of in this state, that we should have a minimum high rise code that people can feel pretty secure that their high rise building is going to be safe and that they can rest easy that the building is going to be secure from fire and I think that the experiences in those states should caution us that we can stop that from happening ever here in Nebraska by adopting this bill. I urge your support for LB 266 and request that it be advanced to E & R for Initial.