

University of Nebraska Medical Center, and during their testimony, they explained the nature of the disease that we are talking about, the problems encountered by people who test positive for the virus, and then the increased discrimination of those who develop the disease itself. And what the disease does is to attack the immune system so that it cannot fight off infections, which under ordinary circumstance would not only be not life threatening but not even considered serious. In the present set of circumstances, when a test is given to determine whether a person has been exposed to the virus, the test reveals antibodies for the virus or to the virus in the blood. If the antibodies are there, then that indicates that a person has been exposed to the virus. There may be from five to ten years before any symptoms show up or the disease, itself, comes into flower. Recently, something occurred that was a shock to everybody in the medical community. A person who had developed the disease, itself, somehow wound up being completely free of all vestiges of the disease, any indication of the virus. The disease, itself, was gone, no antibodies existed, and nobody can explain why that happened. But in the ordinary current of events, AIDS, once it develops, is fatal. There have been tragic instances of children and their families set upon by a frightened community who was intent on trying to keep the child from attending school. The fear that they had is easily understood and the fear was grounded on ignorance about the nature of the disease and how it is transmitted. Some people still are told and others believe that it can be transferred on toilet seats, drinking after somebody, or other types of casual contact, but it has been established through study after study after study that the disease can be transmitted sexually because the virus thrives in blood, semen, and vaginal fluids. It can be transferred through the use of nonsterile needles, but there has to...oh, and a woman who is infected can pass it on to her child as the child is born, or prior to the birth of the child. But the problem is that the public does not understand the nature of the disease, and where there is a lack of understanding, there is fear. Nobody would want to contract AIDS and we all understand this, but for those who test positive or those who have the disease, they yet remain human beings. There are rights and privileges to which they continue to be entitled. This Legislature and others have seen fit to build walls of protection around those groups who would stand to face discrimination, and in this case where a person is facing a virtual death sentence, we should not permit other types of problems to be created through discrimination. So what this