

I can't use you, you're not licensed, you're not tested, therefore, I've got to bring in my own backhoe operator. Number one, requires a certain individual to load up his backhoe and haul it 100 miles or so, increases the cost of the installation. Senator Withem said there are 70 licensed installers. Mr. Speaker, could you crack the gavel for me, please, I'm...I have a rumble behind me.

SPEAKER BAACK: (Gavel.)

SENATOR SCHMIT: Thank you very much. Senator Withem said there are 70 licensed installers. There are 525 communities in the state. I do not know how many of them are from Omaha. I do not know how many of them are union organized and certified, et cetera, et cetera, I would suggest a large portion of them. I would suggest that we do not need to have that kind of installer in Bellwood, Nebraska. Now relative to the fact that you're working with a bomb, there has never been, never been, to my knowledge, a single case of a tank blowing up when it was being removed or installed because of a backhoe operator's failure. What does happen is that when they get a tank out of the ground and it's being cut up for scrap, some gentleman with an acetylene torch strikes the flint and blows the tank up. It's happened a few times. And Mr. Barnett sent us about a dozen such examples, had nothing to do at all with the backhoe operator. What I'm saying at the present time is that the backhoe operator does not need to be certified, does not need to be tested. The installer could be certified, but he can use...but because he is certified he can use anyone he wishes, he could use me with a tile spade, if he wants to, to dig the darn thing out. If it is...now if the test is so simple, what good is it? Wally said it's a simple test, anyone can pass it. If it's that simple, what good is it? Much better to have common sense, ladies and gentlemen. The individual who knows what he's working with is going to exercise due care. These backhoe operators aren't idiots. They worked around electrical installations, they worked around pipelines, power lines, they've done it for years. They've buried all of them, they dug them out. What you have here, ladies and gentlemen, is a limitation on who can perform. It's a limited work issue. It is not an issue of safety, and I swear that it is not. What we are doing is by virtue of the passage of this bill, which I introduced a few years ago, we are imposing upon businesses costs which are unnecessary. We have contractors out there who are ripping off businessmen, charging far in excess of what