

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, again I rise in opposition to the striking of the nonproft. I'm more than willing to work on a way in which we can narrow the scope because I feel that's what.. even though I do understand that Senator Preister is against the bill, if narrowing it is in the form of some amendment can be drafted, I'm willing to work on that. That's not a...that's a given. But the example that Senator Preister uses with regard to the firefighters, and I understand, I've read that story, it was a while back, but it is ironic that we can let those firefighters put their lives on the line and, in fact, they inhale a lot of smoke on the job, but off the job we are not going to let them partake, if they want to, for whatever reason, maybe it's a way that they relax. They don't work all that often, thank God, I mean, they're at the job and they have to be ready all the time, but when they do, every time they get a call their lives are on the line. And if it is just full lung capacity, if I could show Senator Preister that at a certain age when an individual hits a certain age lung capacity starts to decrease whether they're smokers or not, would he then support an amendment to say firefighters could only work up until age 45, for example? I don't think he would. I sure wouldn't. There's a lot of good firefighters, a lot of good people that work beyond a certain standard, physical standard that is arbitrarily put in place at the time that they're hired. They don't always keep up to that standard. You couldn't take every firefighter that is currently employed, for example, in the City of Omaha, and get them to go out and pass the physical tests they had to when they became an employee, when they were first hired on. They probably wouldn't meet the minimum standard in a lot of cases. That doesn't mean they're not great firefighters, doesn't mean they're not professionals. But, in this case, what we're talking about, through this amendment, is expanding and making it basically wide open, the provision in the bill, and I think it does...it does strip the bill of the purpose intended. I am more than willing to work on a narrower version, if that's the purpose behind Senator Preister's first half of this amendment. If it's just merely to try and kill the bill then, I guess, I would as soon leave it the way it is. But I do believe that the proposal, as before us, as others have pointed out, is drafted in a way that tries to limit the scope. It ensures that the kind of thing that Senator Hudkins brought up just doesn't happen, and that was a very good point because what's the distinction? Well, the distinction is, in the example that she gave, that the individual wasn't prohibited from going out and drinking,