

February 14, 1995 LB 121

ASSISTANT CLERK: 19 ayes, 0 nays to go under call.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: The house is under call. Will all senators please return to your seats. Will all unauthorized personnel please leave the floor. The house is under call. Please check in. Senator Preister, you going to continue closing? Please continue.

SENATOR PREISTER: Thank you again, Honorable President. I would say that for those who may not be concerned about people, for those who may not be concerned about the health and well-being of the workers, you might also consider the artwork and the treasure that this building is. We had Mitta Jensen (phonetic), a private conservator of fine art, who talked about the effects of the tobacco smoke on the art in this building and the effects on this building, also Norm Geske, who is also an art conservator, he stated that there has already been \$100,000 worth of restoration work that has been done on the art in this building. He stated that the problem of air pollution is a universal one for museums, libraries, public buildings, monuments of all kinds. I think we have a responsibility to the taxpayers who have invested in this building to preserve it. I think that the artwork in this wonderful building is something that is continually being affected, if you don't think about that, stop out in the lobby sometime and watch what's happening out there and see that that smoke only stays in that designated area. I think also that we're talking about expense here, we're talking about...at the current time we're looking at \$402 million just for the State of Nebraska that we're paying in related health care costs, singularly due to tobacco smoking. We're talking about, at conservative estimates, \$1,000 per state employee in annual costs, according to the National Cancer Institute, that it costs the State of Nebraska for costs by those employees, we're talking potential savings in terms of insurance costs if this were to go into passage, we're talking about savings on cleaning bills, we're talking about the equipment, our carpets, all of the furnishings. If you're only looking at it from an economic standpoint then you'll see that even on the fiscal note it says no fiscal impact, but may save dollars through elimination of potential lawsuits, and we haven't even addressed the litigation that's potential by not providing a safe workplace, that we can do with this bill and possible reduction of cleaning requirements. Here's a bill that can save the state money, it can save employees health, it can