

basis of sexual orientation. Senator Chambers went into more detail about what that, in fact, entails and I believe that is accurate as far as his description of the bill. I'll be happy to answer any questions about the committee's action. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Abboud. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Madam President, members of the Legislature, when the bill carried the number LB 395 it was advanced from committee. Senator Bromm at that time was a member and he voted with Senator Preister, Senator Schimek and myself so that we could put it to the floor. This is one of those kind of issues that is not going to go away. If you would have read U.S. News and World Report under the date of March 6 of this year, this is what you would have found on page 34. More than half of all Fortune 1000 companies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. More than half of these huge companies who are interested in what is called the bottom line and making a profit, they recognize that not only is it wrong to discriminate against people on this basis, but it doesn't make good economic sense. There is a huge talent pool which is being cut off when we allow blanket discrimination against people in this manner. This bill does not talk about conduct. This bill talks about sexual orientation. Massachusetts has had such a bill on the books for a long time and if anybody is interested in seeing a copy of a report that they've prepared talking about the impact of the bill, I will share it with you but it is too thick for me to have made a copy for everybody and perhaps not everybody would be interested. But you know how a person's sexual orientation was determined by the businesses that chose to discriminate? They would see a woman and because she looked a certain way or wore her hair in a certain way, was labeled a "butch", so she was homosexual and could be discriminated against. A man would be described as a "swish" which means, as they say on the street, he walks funny. Those were bases in the minds of people to deny an individual what is a human right. Every person has the right to earn an honest living. If you look at the committee report, you will see in this case, as was the case in Massachusetts when the bill was brought there, there was no organized business opposition to this bill. All of the religious peoples' concerns were taken care of. If they don't want to hire homosexuals, if they don't want to allow them to attend their churches, whatever they in their particular religious persuasion feel is the appropriate reaction to these