

February 2, 1996 LB 645

SENATOR WITEK: Well, I'm not sure. I know that there is money involved, Senator, but I don't consider it a hammer because all other states have complied, some before the federal crime legislation was even passed. So...

SENATOR CHAMBERS: But here's the...

SENATOR WITEK: ...I think this is just to be helpful to states that haven't enacted it to get it going.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: But you're saying...

SENATOR WITEK: So we can have it uniform.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Are you saying that there is no penalty the federal government would try to impose if a bill such as this is not enacted?

SENATOR WITEK: I think the only tie in is \$300,000 of federal funds, but I don't consider it a penalty other than what they're doing is "incenting" to get this going so they have a uniform registration across the United States. They want to have everybody involved in it.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. I was just wondering what the consequences might be. And if I had a bill such as this and really believed in it, I would not even use the argument that the federal government mandates it because I think that has no bearing whatsoever. Either it is a bill that has merit or it is a bill that does not. I do, in this instance, understand what motivates people to have a bill such as this. And I think it probably started with one individual who launched a crusade in a campaign and many people jumped on the bandwagon. I always have a concern about civil liberties. And the liberties of those who are held in the least esteem in this society are the ones whose rights need to be protected. Other people are going to be okay. I'll quote from Jesus again, if you do good to those who do good to you, so what, even the worst people do that. So if the only ones whose rights are to be protected are those people we respect, those people we esteem, then we don't need to pass laws because their rights are never going to come into question or under attack anyway. But when people have been branded and categorized by law, as is being done in this bill, it's a short step to treating them as though they have no rights whatsoever.