

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office

January 11, 2000 LB 505

being cool is probably not the most important thing. But when you're 14, being cool is everything. It is everything, and that makes kids incredibly susceptible to advertising. Talk to parents today whose kids watch a lot of TV and the demands that their children make for expensive shoes and Nike this and Addidas that, and Reeboks this and designer this. Where did that come from? It came from Madison Avenue selling to kids--a very susceptible group, and susceptible enough to start a habit that can last a lifetime and shorten their lives. Now it was about...not quite a year, it was April of last year that we considered this last issue. Since that day, since the last time we talked about it, over 2,000 Nebraskans have died of smoking-related accidents. Not accidents; it's a life of smoking, of illnesses rather--2,055. Statistics tell us that 2,055 Nebraskans died by smoking-related illnesses between the last time we talked about this issue and today. And guess how many kids started smoking, kids that are in your town and my town. Six thousand twenty-eight kids have started smoking. They weren't smokers when we were talking about this last April 13th, and they are smokers today, 6,000 of them. Well, we couldn't pass it last year. We didn't have the muscle,...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...we didn't have the means, and 6,000 kids are addicted to tobacco today when we could have done something. Think the tobacco companies have made a profit in Nebraska in the last, oh, ten months? Oh, yes, they have. Yes, on a pro rata basis, figuring out their total profits and our consumption in this state to others, tobacco companies made \$28.5 million profit. That's not net, that's...I'm sorry, that's not gross, that's net. That's profit, \$28.5 million profit hooking 6,000 teenagers in Nebraska, who are buying or getting cigarettes illegally and learning to smoke and then having their lives shortened. Two thousand deaths, 6,000 kids addicted, and \$28.5 million profit--that's the record from the last time the Legislature talked about this issue.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Time.

SENATOR LANDIS: We're going to talk about it today and we're going to talk about it tomorrow, and we're going to go on record