

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

February 16, 2000 LB 1018

you would have the problem. If a manufacturer were to raise the prices inordinately high, people who would have bought a Ford are not going to buy a Ford. They'll buy some other car. This bill is not designed to protect competition. This bill is to protect the vested financial interest of an artificially created and contrived class of entrepreneurs. There would still be competition among those who sell cars. Say that Ford has no more franchisees in this state but sells the cars itself and repairs them, Daimler Chrysler the same, GMC the same. The competition then is among the Titans and each is able to look out for its interests. And if one sells the car at a much higher price than the others, that is a self-defeating commercial activity. Competition would exist between and among these large operators. Senator Beutler raised the kind of issue that I ordinarily raise, and he's doomed to have to stand on this floor and condemn his colleagues for hypocrisy. Because when we begin to talk about working women or poor people or those who cannot afford medical coverage, then we're going to have people say, as the Banking Committee always says, we don't want to dictate coverage to the insurance industry. We don't want to require them to cover this particular ailment or that particular ailment because we don't see a compelling state interest in ensuring that all of our citizens have access to medical care. That's not a compelling state interest. Prenatal care is not a compelling state interest so we don't do that. But when it comes to motor vehicle dealers, then we have a compelling state interest because these guys are so essential to the health, happiness and welfare of everybody in this state that they have to be protected in a way that nobody else is. These are not volunteers. These are not charitable operations. They're not contributing to education; to health, either physical, mental or otherwise. They are interested in making as much money as they possibly can.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: What would stop dealers from agreeing to set prices at a certain level on the particular vehicle being sold? What would prevent that? This bill doesn't deal with that. So maybe when we get to Select File that's what I will say or do. If there's any evidence that these dealers pushing a certain line of car have come to an agreement on prices, then they are