

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

March 28, 2000

LB 1405

to something that Senator Dwite Pedersen asked in terms of spontaneous abortions and the availability of tissue from those because I think a lot of this discussion comes down to whether we agree or disagree that the tissue is available, because everybody keeps saying that they want the research to continue. Well, that's not what the bill says if you believe that the tissue is not available. But in terms of spontaneous abortions, there are 700,000 per year in the U.S. Because these often occur outside of the health care setting and because most are due to severe abnormalities and because fetal death most often occurs two to three weeks before the miscarriage, the tissue is often unsuitable for research or transplantation. And when Senator Pedersen talked about a child that is born, even born prematurely, that has some sort of a problem that would not allow them to be able to live, those cells are not appropriate because they don't contain the ingredients that we have talked about, that Senator Chambers talked about so clearly, that they can be rejected. They are already differentiated, those issues that make the fetal cells particularly useful in this kind of research. But if we do believe in the research, why are we looking at this bill as a way to deal with it? Why aren't...I mean I keep saying, if the tissue is available, I just can't imagine that the university is not aggressively trying to find it and trying to use it especially in light of everything that's been said. If it's there, then why don't the proponents of LB 1405 bring it to the university? And then if the university doesn't use it, then I think we really do have an issue that we're going to intervene immediately about. Senator Hilgert asked if the tissue were available, would we support, we, who have questions about that, who are supporters of the research, would we support the bill? Well, if the tissue were available, why would the bill be necessary? If there was an alternative to the use of this and we can continue the research, why would we need to have the bill? And that's why I think that if we...if we really want to go someplace, we need to be looking at what the middle ground is here because the bill is not the middle ground. The bill does not accomplish what the proponents are even saying they want, which is a continuation of the research. The middle ground is everyone, not just...not just putting...not just saying, well, university, find it, knowing full well that there isn't...it isn't available, everyone finding the alternative source, and bringing it forward, everyone trying to