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SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Mr. President. The committee amendments strike the original provision and become the bill, as Senator Price indicated. While many of the key features of the original bill are retained, the committee amendments do significantly affect the scope of the program. As originally introduced, LB 825 established a licensing and inspection program for commercial breeders and dealers of dogs and cats and other types of commercial pet facilities. The bill provides that upon the effective date of application...of applicable sections operation as a commercial breeder or dealer, boarding kennel or animal shelter would be prohibited unless the facility was licensed, and this is what Senator Price had indicated. The Department of Agriculture would be responsible for establishing a program of prelicense, an annual inspection of licensed facilities, and to establish inspection procedures in operational and sanitary standards at least equal to those of the Federal Animal Welfare Act by which such facilities were to operate. A fee schedule was established based on the number of animals housed or handled and the type of facility. The bill provides for progressive disciplinary action against license holders upon initial and repeated violation of the act, and failure to meet the operational standard established by the department. The bill provides as well for administrative due process for license holders or license applicants who have been denied a license or face disciplinary action. Most of the changes in the committee amendments derive from the cost of administering the inspection program. The original bill was contemplated an initial and at least one annual inspection with the prospect of some follow-up inspections of those facilities which had failed an initial or routine inspection. Fees generated by the bill were expected to fall well short of the cost to implement that program. The preliminary...the primary change represented by the committee amendments to make the department's inspection duties permissive...make the department's inspection duties permissive rather an mandatory. While facilities would still be obligated to be licensed and operate according to the operational and sanitary standards, the department would retain authority to conduct inspections. It is the intent of the amendments to...such inspections would be performed primarily on a complaint or a referral basis. The department may still conduct spot and audit inspections of the licensed facilities. However, conducting inspections on this