

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

March 20, 2003 LB 608

overnight, and that in fact that crafting process is somewhat rushed, so that a word-by-word analysis doesn't necessarily capture the intention. And I'd be willing to go back through and take a look at it. There are some pieces in the language that I'm...that on first blush I think need work. The amendment seems to say, intentionally or habitually violate these laws. But there may be an idea to work there...work with there, and I'll tell you why. We certainly have plenty of violations to deal with. We may get to the same place, depending on whether or not Senator Bromm's language is such that you can actually use it. Because there are a couple of soft places in it, it seems to me. Let me give a place, for example, that that might well...there would be a reason to use this, but in fact the language might not be available to us, and that is in the environmental area, where it's quite common for a company not to admit wrongdoing, but to still pay fines. Now, we got a violation or not? Kind of an interesting problem. In fact, in the year 2000, the EPA joined our DEQ, because our DEQ wasn't able to get the attention of IBP sufficiently, so that the federal government came in and sued IBP for \$291 million of environmental failures. Now, when it all got done, the outcome was \$27 million of new equipment and fines. Even though IBP never admitted wrongdoing, that I know of, they paid the fines and they did the equipment change. However, during the years...and this was almost a decade, in which the Dakota City people said, we know there are bad conditions here, your emissions are causing problems, and there was a health link in...and by the way, this comes from Pat Engel. He said to me, he said, federal health studies showing a link between the company's poisonous emissions and upper respiratory problems in Dakota County in the last decade have been published in peer-reviewed medical journals. It wasn't just, you know, some short-term or nontoxic kind of a violation, some technical violation. It was a life-threatening, respiratory-threatening, medically provable injury. All the time that that was going on, the company admitted no wrongdoing, failed to correct the problems, met with the community, it's true, but then didn't do anything about it. In the opinion...and by the way, this is Pat's opinion. In my opinion, companies like IBP, now Tyson/IBP, who have...who behave with callous disregard for our laws should not receive public dollars to fund their