

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

April 8, 2003

LB 303

CLERK: 15 ayes, 0 nays to cease debate.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Debate does cease. Senator Brown, you're recognized to close on your amendment, FA1195.

SENATOR BROWN: Thank you, Mr. President. Motorcyclists are three times as likely to suffer a brain injury when compared...unhelmeted, as compared to helmeted. That is...the thing is that we're talking about facts here. We're talking about...that we say that one person's fact is extraneous and the other person...you know, we're putting down the facts. This whole amendment is not about arguing the facts. It is about who pays. Who is going to pay? Senator Smith does not want the person who may be more likely to use alcohol because he, himself, said that we have the information that an unhelmeted motorcyclist is more likely to use alcohol. He doesn't want that person who already has been shown to make decisions that I'm not sure that I think are very responsible, and they are not very responsible to society, he doesn't want that person to have to pay \$250 a month for their long-term care. He wants our taxpayers to pay \$250 a month, or whatever it would turn out to be. Yes, we don't know exactly what the numbers are. Senator Jensen and I have both been trying to arrive at some numbers. We do know that the average cost is \$100,000 per year. That is an amount that we know. And so if unhelmeted motorcyclists are three times more likely to suffer head injuries, then we are going to have three times more incidence of head injuries on those people who choose not to wear a helmet, if they're involved in a crash, if we are to adopt this bill. I just am concerned about who is going to pay for that cost. If we are talking about allowing people to make individual choices, that's fine. His own information would say that those choices for unhelmeted motorcyclists are not always the best choices, but that's fine if they want to do it on their own. I don't believe that we can say that the rest of the taxpayers should subsidize that decision making. And for that reason, I would urge the adoption of FA1195. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Brown. You've heard the closing on amendment, FA1195, to the committee amendments to