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FLOOR DEBATE

April 8, 2003            LB 303

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Pedersen, you're recognized to open on your amendment to the committee amendments to LB 303.

SENATOR Dw. PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. Eleven years I've been in the Legislature and LB 303, and the other different numbers that it's had before, have come complete circle in it. I even wrote this legislation at one time, helped write it, and supported it fully. I don't know that repealing it is the answer, but I don't know that leaving it there is hurting anything either. If you've noticed, the helmets that most of the riders wear are not what is supposed to be the law anyway. A lot of them wear these little beanies that aren't even padded underneath. And law enforcement doesn't have the time to even write them up. What has changed for me is the testimony of the people that have come in with the sore hearts, and the pain and loss that they've had because of head injuries. Will these helmets stop these head injuries? No. But I must tell you on the other side, if I were a motorcycle rider, which I never have been, I wouldn't wear one of them because you couldn't hear anything and can't see anything. The time I did go as a passenger on one, but I think it was the second year I was in the Legislature, went out to lunch with the ABATE, and I thought it was almost claustrophobic not being able to hear or see. But in the last couple of years in some of the studies and some of the prep rooms I've been in, and prep rooms, to some people, would be embalming rooms, or in the morgues, I've also seen the result of people not wearing helmets--brains all over the place, not even enough left, in some cases, to use for tissue study. The amendment I offer to you is one that every biker that I've talked to individually said they would have no problem with. I understand that some of the bikers, however, do, and they are not ones that I visited with. But it simply says, and it adds to Senator Smith's bill, LB 303, that they carry proof that they would be...they consent to donation of their body organs and tissue as provided in Section 60-494. Some people have referred to motorcycle riders as PODs, P-O-D, for a long time, which is potential organ donors. And it's not because of the way they ride their motorcycles. It's because of how they get killed on them. It is my understanding and my belief that most of the time when somebody gets killed on a motorcycle that it was not the