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FLOOR DEBATE

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Nebraska. And it's pretty clear to me that she would be opposing concealed. She wasn't interested in concealing weapons. Now that's kind of an easy shot, pun intended, because, obviously, none of us can debate that issue. An easier one to understand is conversations that I have had with officers in my part of town. Without exception, they have opposed this bill. And police officers that I have talked to are surprised that their department hasn't conveyed their feeling that this is bad legislation. When I spoke earlier to this, I spoke of a friend of mine who in a traffic incident reached through his window and pulled a pistol out of the glove compartment. He was a military man with training in this, and he told the four men who were approaching him with tire irons to stand back and they did not. He shot one time. One of them died and he went to prison for six years. And some of you have approached me privately and said that just doesn't sound possible or right because that's a clear case of self-defense and he must not have had a good attorney. Well, I left out a couple of small details in that story. One is, my friend is black. And the other is that the four men who were approaching him with tire irons were white. A black man does not have the right to defend himself against attacks by white persons in some of our courts. Every one of us would oppose that thought. Every one of us would deplore that thought, but that's the real world that Senator Chambers and I live in, and I just want you to know that's what we have to deal with. Why would I want to lead my neighbors, all of whom are black, why would I want to lead my neighbors into a trap? They are my friends. They are people I've lived with for some time. They are good people. And why would I suggest to them that maybe they would be safer if they carried a concealed weapon? My friend who went to prison grieved about this. If only he had not had that gun with him, then he, you know, would have ended up in the hospital but not in prison. He was led into a trap by his own fear of what could happen to him out in the world, and when the time came, he was declared not able to defend himself. That leads to the final comment that I would make. It is amazing to me that this sheriff, and a couple of sheriffs have commented to me on this, that this sheriff is to stand across from somebody making an application for a permit and to determine whether they are mentally stable. Well, I'm not sure about the mental stability of anybody in this room.