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Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

May 13, 2003

LB 285, 759

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. This is an amendment that was actually introduced before I introduced the amendment on LB 285. It is a sunset and I do intend to withdraw it, but before I do, I want to go back and recap where we are on LB 759. It's an opportunity for us to discuss what LB 759 still looks like. In the discussions last week, we were talking about the broadening of the sales tax into the construction field. There was an amendment that was offered to take that piece out. It was not successful. There was an amendment to broaden the taxes even across the board and lower the rates. That was not successful. So what we're left with here in LB 759 is something that actually becomes the nightmare of the Department of Revenue, certainly akin to the repair/installation dichotomy that we created last year in LB 1085. When you look at the Omaha city proportion within the lead distribution and you see the yards that are full of lead contamination and you realize that you can scrape the soil away and replace it with new soil, that actually you can remove that contamination only temporarily. And the reason I say temporarily, because we have a number of houses which have been painted with lead paint, and the paint is old and it peels, and when homeowners go in and they scrape the paint and they sand the paint to try to prepare the surface to cover it with new paint, the lead particles drift back down into the new soil and recontaminate it. Now, there are only two ways that you can get rid of lead paint. You can either scrape it off entirely, or you can cover it, and one of the ways you can cover it is with siding. And I passed out to you a piece of paper that was actually an estimate on what the cost of sales tax on labor to put siding on a home would be, and on just a very ordinary size home it was \$397 in sales tax on that labor. Now we're not talking about people who are building a new home. We're not talking about people who are adding on a large addition. We're not talking about people who are doubling the value of their home. We're only talking about people who want to keep the lead out of their soil so that their children do not suffer brain damage. And that's one of the problems that I see with the construction piece as it now exists. Senator Brashear brought to us a bill that I thought was a grand plan. He's brought it before and it's something that I thought was visionary. I thought it was something that Nebraska needed to look at for the