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LB 303

public funds of \$234,620 for hospital care to patients with head injury resulting from motorcycle crashes in Nebraska, during the four year period, 1996 to 2000. Of these \$234,000, Medicaid program paid 84 percent, or \$196,000.

SENATOR VRTISKA: One minute.

SENATOR SMITH: Let's say that carnage and mayhem starts to come about from fewer helmets being worn and that number doubles. Okay, it doubles to \$100,000 a year in Medicaid expenses, \$100,000 a year. Now it wouldn't take much to make that up in the dollars that are spent from all the doctors and attorneys traveling on the Harley-Davidsons to go to Sturgis, South Dakota. They spend a lot of money. So what it boils down to is economics, and I believe that the numbers speak for themselves. The numbers are there to support that taxes will not go up if LB 303 is enacted, and it will not break the budget. Again, I point to the map...

SENATOR VRTISKA: Time.

SENATOR SMITH: ...of trying to make Nebraska more competitive with other states. And I realize that this is a very emotional issue.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Time, Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Jensen.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Senator Vrtiska, members of the Legislature. First of all, I would ask that...and certainly I appreciate Senator Smith in his diligence. However, there are 17 amendments on this, and unless you feel that you have enough to bring cloture, at this time in our legislative year with nine days left, I hope you will take a look at those and there will be others filed also. And the reason I am so passionate about this is, as Chairman of Health and Human Services Committee, we listen to the many people that come to our committee, everything from hospital, nurses, doctors, and they all say the same thing;