

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

January 12, 2004 LB 172

it a million times when we debated this the first time. I think that's a fair characterization. And let me tell you what's wrong with that, because there is something fundamentally wrong, and that is that some parents, a small portion, but some parents, cannot be trusted with the well-being of their children. Some parents cannot be trusted with the well-being of their children. Look, I asked for just a few of the recent articles in the paper. A father in Nebraska threw his 18-month-old son from a stopped car into a ditch along I-80 last May. The father then assaulted a woman who attempted to help the child. This is not a parent who can be trusted with the well-being of their child or the decision as to whether that 15-year-old girl or 16-year-old girl should or shouldn't have an abortion. Can't be trusted. An Omaha girl, seven years old, in the hospital, reportedly due to abuse by her father, was given a lethal dose of an antidepressant by her mother, who was intoxicated throughout her stay at the hospital. The girl spit out the drug. The mother carried her daughter, on IV medications, out to the hospital parking lot, so that she could have a...she could smoke a cigarette. This parent should not be trusted with the well-being of her child's medical future. That's why this provision exists, and it's why information should be disseminated. A five-month-old girl, neglected by her parents, left out in the cold without adequate clothing. A three-year-old boy, found out wandering home alone for six hours in Lincoln. The mother was cited for neglect. In Lincoln, a 22-month-old dies of repeated beatings by her father. We've had 30 deaths of children in this state in the last four years. A three-year-old Lincoln girl scalded by her father with water of 120 degrees in a bathtub due to having a toilet training failure. The child spent 53 days...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...in the hospital and received four operations to graft new skin to burns. There are parents who cannot be trusted with the well-being of their children and should not be the only line of defense in their medical decisions. And when the underlying argument really is, get the government out of it, this should be between parents and children, while that may be true for most, the overwhelming number, there is a body of