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FLOOR DEBATE

January 14, 2004 LR 4

opening on the motion to bracket LR 4CA until a certain time. Open for discussion on that motion. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, friends, enemies, neutrals, Senator Schrock said he was going to allow discussion before he put his motion to bracket. My light was on. I'm not opposed to the bracketing. And after I speak, I will withdraw my objection. But I had one more comment. And I believe that the debate, or the discussion, that Senator Wehrbein and I are engaging in is the best thing that could have happened with this proposal. If we had been engaging in a discussion of this kind yesterday, I still would have opposed it, but we would have been dealing with substantive issues related to a real problem that is facing this state. BSE is not going to go away. And I just want to make clear what I was saying before Senator Wehrbein spoke the last time. I'm not saying that the producers are not responding to what is a genuine problem facing them. I acknowledge they see a loss in the monetary value of their livestock. Nevertheless, whenever a run occurs, whether it's on a bank, or a program such as this which is sponsored and run by the USDA, the run is a sign of panic. The panic can have a justifiable basis. If this building began to shake, rattle, and roll, you would see a panic. Now, people perhaps should not behave in a panicked manner, such as everybody running to the same door and jamming up and dying from suffocation and trampling instead of the building falling on them. But panic is involved. These plants that are in trouble in Nebraska count primarily on exporting their products. They are able to persuade people in other countries to eat what people in this country generally won't eat. They sell organs, tongues, tails, heads, and I don't know what else. They euphemize...the word, not euthanize...as specialty or variety meats. That's a nice way of saying what would be considered slaughterhouse waste. Because America has such an ineffective or inadequate testing system, as viewed by the rest of the world, 30 countries that are the primary importers of American beef have closed their boundaries. With that happening, any processor, any operator who relies on the export market, is in serious trouble until those countries open their borders, because there is no domestic market for what these people are producing. Those in the industry can talk and