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January 28, 2004 LB 559

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Baker. You've heard the opening on the committee amendments, offered by the Transportation Committee to LB 559. Open for discussion on that motion. Senator Bourne.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President, members. Senator Baker, would you yield to a question or two, please?

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Baker, would you respond?

SENATOR BAKER: Yes, I would be happy to.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Senator Baker. I'm trying to get up to speed on your bill. I know we talked about this briefly a few weeks ago. But I received an e-mail from a constituent, and this individual...I've actually received several e-mails regarding this bill, with some concerns. And I won't read the entire thing to you--and again, I'm trying to get the gist of their concerns--but she basically says, I'm concerned about too much power being put in the hands of someone who is not an authority and does not have proper investigative means to decline...or excuse me, to verify the validity of documents presented, and yet has the power to retain them and/or decline to issue a driver's license. And then she cites a personal example. She attempted to secure a new license with a new last name. I assume she was married. And this woman is of Hispanic descent. I presented my valid United States passport, complete with photo and name information. And then she goes on to say, I'm a U.S.-born citizen, born, raised, educated, a business owner, all in Omaha. I speak perfectly clear "English"...English. I can't speak it this morning. (Laugh) I speak perfectly clear English, and that reflects my university-level education and professional demeanor. I was denied the driver's license because the young woman at the driver's license counter did not consider my valid U.S. passport sufficient verification of my identity. It took a call to an administrator, and his intervention, properly educated staff at the location, and time out of a busy schedule to make a second trip. So basically, they had to get an administrator, because the counter individual wasn't properly trained in recognizing that it was a valid document. So this woman had to make a