

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

February 20, 2004 LB 906

that were trying to get into the field, and originally that bill came from the industry, but only part of the industry. The whole purpose of the standards there were, I think, to create competitive differences that would keep some people out of the field and allow the longer-standing, bigger firms to stay in business. Here, I understand, the origin is not from the industry itself, and that makes a difference to me. Here the origin is from the health community. Now, what I don't see is the place where the health community and the business of doing this has intersected. There's a small business reality here that does not seem to have intersected with the health community's perspective of what it takes to do this in a healthy way. I got to say I think we're going to be hard-pressed to do this on the floor. This is exactly the kind of thing...the last time we were in this situation, we sent off some of our members to meet, confer, and redraft the bill so that it was realistic. The goal was, what's realistic? Achieve the legitimate goals of health and also make it so that small business could comply. We did that the last time we were in this situation. I don't see why we can't do that here. Let me tell you where I am on this bill at the moment. I'm going to vote for the Jensen amendment because I think it does away with the onerous 6,000-hour burden, and I like the move towards the apprentice. I like the grammatical improvements. It is grafted onto a bill which, at the moment, I wouldn't vote for because...not be...well, because I think it's overreaching in the small business context in which this comes up. What is the proper direction? I can't answer that individually, and I'll be hard-pressed to answer it individually. This is the kind of thing that a relatively small group of people and deputations from among the floor from people who care about this the most, namely, I would think, Senator Stuhr, Senator Jensen and Senator Bourne, with a little amount of effort and some technical expertise and assistance, not only from the health perspective, which is entirely legitimate, but also from the small business perspective should be able to solve for us. We're not going to get there on the floor doing this, in my estimation. My guess is that we can draft the appropriate bill. We just can't do it on the floor. I vote yes for the Jensen amendment, no for the bill, and hope that cooler heads can work out a legitimate balance between a small business reality and legitimate health needs. That's the kind of thing a