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FLOOR DEBATE

March 10, 2004      LB 599

Norfolk area detailing concerns with the current Engineers and Architects Act. One of the letters, from Medallion Construction Company, details four projects that fall into the category of unnecessary but required professional assistance, thus requiring an engineer's and/or architect's seal. Not only are these contractors and builders losing jobs, but they are losing revenue and profit dollars. The loss of revenue affects the owners, the general contractors, the subcontractors, suppliers, and also local economies. Of course, there is a definite need for professional engineers and architects and their services. However, not all projects require or warrant these services and fees. In addition to public health and safety, we recognize that that is "impairment" to all conscientious builders and designers. But smaller developments effectively bleed to death economically because of the stringent requirements, which in reality are just a stamp of approval of a common building principle. I would urge your support of LB 599 and AM2502, as they will foster economic development in Nebraska, and especially in our rural areas, and make it more financially feasible for smaller home and business owners to prosper. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK:      Thank you, Senator Don Pederson. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER:      Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, I've had some conversation with Senator Tyson on this bill. And I wanted to have a little further conversation with Senator Jensen, if I might, because I'm somewhat forgetful of the negotiated rule-making process, and I just want to be sure I understand it entirely. Because it does appear to me to be a helpful thing, but I'm not sure with respect to the dimensions of this new prerogative here. But generally speaking, with the exception of the first two sections, it seems to allow, with regard to a number of exemptions, a direct negotiation between the agency that has an interest in preserving these exemptions, with those interests out there that have an interest in essentially broadening the exemptions. Is that a fair statement so far, Senator Jensen?

SENATOR CUDABACK:      Senator Jensen, would you yield?