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FLOOR DEBATE

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citizen of this state who wishes to participate, a matrix will be developed that will identify each building occupancy as it relates to the building code, and a reasonable minimal...minimum level will be established that will determine when a design professional's services are required. As it is today, a design professional's services are required by state law for projects as small as 140 square feet, 14 by 10, smaller than my little workshop. In fact, as the Engineers and Architects Regulation Act reads, there are only five occupancies that can reach the maximum size of 5,000 square feet before a design professional's services are required. Virtually every commercial project that occupancies may...that we review at this time requires a full set of design stamps. While it is true that some building occupancies may receive a nonexempt status in the future, in reality they are nonexempt today. We truly believe that many occupancies will increase substantially in square footage and occupant load before requiring professional design services. It is readily apparent that the rules, as they are today, are much too restrictive and are...and an undue burden on this state's construction industry. By approving LB 599, the Nebraska State Legislature will enable the construction industry to reach a reasonable level of common sense and promote the growth of commercial projects within all Nebraska communities. I know of a number of examples just in my locale where the projects were abandoned because they couldn't afford the design stamps. In one case I know of, the church wanted to build an addition. The pastor of that church had spent many years in the construction business. He drew his plans; was told by permits and inspections he had to have stamps on it.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR TYSON: The stamps put the project, which the church could afford, beyond the financial capability, and the architect who was willing to stamp his plans, and they were professionally done, also told him that those plans would become that architect's property. Now what we're after here is to bring a little common sense into a situation that holds back the economic development of the state of Nebraska. I was also told that the reason that there's no big push from Omaha is that Omaha ignores the act; we don't. This law needs to be changed.