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FLOOR DEBATE

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return the bill to Select File.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Bourne. You've heard the opening on the motion by Senator Bourne to return LB 906 to Select File for specific amendment. Open for discussion on that motion. Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I stand in opposition to Senator Bourne's amendment and to his motion to return the bill to Select File, and I want to give you a number of reasons that I'm doing so. First, I believe that there needs to be a standard of professionalism for body art practitioners. For a profession that has the possibility of transmitting blood-borne diseases, including hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, and causes other problems, such as nerve damage, tissue damage, tetanus, skin allergies, and infections, as well as possible mental and social consequences, requiring a high school diploma or GED seems to be a very minimum requirement. The body art profession, in one sense, is close to that of the nursing profession in that needles and other instruments are used to puncture the flesh with the possibility of blood and body fluids being involved. Both professions require that the practitioners understand and be able to practice safety, sanitation, and sterilization procedures in order to protect the public. This bill does not become law until April 1, 2005, which I believe gives ample time for someone that does not meet these requirements to work on this deficiency. I have heard from only one practitioner, and Senator Bourne and I visited about that this morning, and I believe it is the same practitioner. We did follow up and do some investigating and, after doing some checking, I believe that this practitioner is probably a bad actor. It is our understanding they have moved their practice from another state because that state began doing some regulation, and so now they have moved to Nebraska. I have also visited with a number of other body practitioners...body art practitioners who do not have a problem with this requirement. I believe I've tried very hard to work with Senator Bourne and Senator Chambers and others on this bill. We've been willing to rewrite, add amendments, all in the spirit of compromise. And I just wanted to say, Senator Bourne, if I could have your attention for a moment,