

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

April 13, 2004 LB 613

confines of this proposed legislation will be clear. Senator Foley mentioned what he thinks of as a layperson. We are legislators. We are lawmakers. And I would say the majority of us have an image in our mind of what domestic violence consists of. And it is more precise than the definition of obscenity, which a judge defined by saying, I cannot define it, but I know it when I see it. And based on that vague notion, which itself is based on the ability to recognize a thing when it is seen, punishments are meted out based on the establishment of a violation of the standards of decency, which violation has been criminalized. In this case, where domestic violence is involved, there are organizations throughout this state, there are individuals throughout this state, who if you approach them would give an amazingly similar definition or description, if you will, of what constitutes domestic violence. Often there is the connotation of one party being much stronger than the other, either physically, financially, or otherwise. But that in itself is not enough. As Senator Mossey pointed out, there is a general assault law that covers any situation where one person harms another under the definition of what constitutes assault. But some laws need to be fine-tuned. A child is a human being. But we have child abuse statutes, because of the status of the child. When we talk about spouse abuse, the term "spouse" restricts that. But when you talk about domestic abuse, it's letting you know that there are intimate or sexual relationships, and when people maintain a relationship and sex is a part of it,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...there is a different set of circumstances that obtain between those two people. So I don't think we, by and large, have a problem with what constitutes domestic violence, even if Senator Foley does. And I think even without his support, this bill will move, and it will be enacted into law, because it merits it, and it addresses a defined, specific evil in society that cannot be left unaddressed in Nebraska any longer, in my opinion. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Bourne, your light is the last light. You may speak, or else close on