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April 13, 2004      LB 625

the body is. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. You've heard the opening on the motion to return LB 625 for specific amendment. Senator Brown, for discussion.

SENATOR BROWN: Mr. President, although I don't have concerns with the language of this amendment, I do want to remind the body that this is the third time that this bill has been on Final Reading. And it is a bill that was advanced from the Judiciary Committee 8 to 0, with the underlying committee amendment. On the first time that it was up on Final Reading, the NEOC, who had never spoken to me about this bill, did not show up at the hearing, expressed concerns about the impact of the bill on their HUD funding. So an amendment was drafted with the assistance of the NEOC, and was adopted, which addressed their concerns. And they are now in support of the bill. And in the packet that Senator Chambers sent you, there is a letter to that...actually, there's a letter and there's an e-mail to that effect. The second time the bill was on Final Reading, I passed over it at the request of Senator Chambers, because he needed time to investigate an assertion by entities other than the NEOC that this would necessarily jeopardize the HUD funding. I will admit, any change in state law will cause the HUD to review that change. But the change will be determined about whether we're in substantial compliance. So the question then becomes, does this change substantially change what our current state law is? Currently our state law says that the aggrieved person and the respondent, at any time upon request, shall receive information derived from an investigation and any final investigative report relating to that investigation. That's what our current law says. What we are doing in this bill is to make sure that they are notified of this fact when the...when they are served, and that they can receive copies. My agreement in passing over the bill was mostly to be collegial, but also because I believed that the information that Senator Chambers would get about the reality of this situation would be compelling. Still today, again at the last minute, these entities which receive money from the conciliation process have continued their assertion that the NEOC will lose HUD funds. Now every correspondent says, yes, it will be reviewed, but we