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March 11, 2005 LB 76, 597

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. AM0699 is LB 597. If you want to bring that up on your screens, LB 597 was a bill that was heard before the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. It was advanced to General File on the 3rd of February. It had 8 votes for advancing the bill; no one voted against it. There were no opponents. The proponents testifying were the Nebraska Trucking Association, the Nebraska Agri-Business Association. The bill is dealing with commercial driver's license HAZMAT endorsements. LB 76 is the bill that was dealing with commercial driver's licenses as a whole, which was advanced to Select File. LB 597, which is AM0699, is dealing with the HAZMAT endorsement portion of a CDL. Let me point out that there are 60-some...73,000 CDL holders in Nebraska, 73,000; 16,000 of those CDL holders have HAZMAT endorsements on their licenses. That provides them the ability to transport hazardous materials, hazardous materials meaning biological agents, toxic chemicals, flammable material, explosive material, and radioactive material. We have to get into compliance with federal regulations here by May 31 of 2005; hence, we felt, in the best management of time, we should amend LB 597 onto LB 76. The...I'll briefly go through the bill. And I'll be glad to answer any questions. What...this bill is a result of the federal requirements of the PATRIOT Act, homeland security issues and transportation security. If you want to follow along--it doesn't look like there's anybody much interested in following along--but if you want to follow along, Section 3 deals with adopting the federal requirements for interstate shipment of etioloical agents, which is something that's toxic and is subject to increased toxicity exposure to sunlight and air. I can think of chlorine gas, and things like that. Section 4 amends some obsolete language. It allows the department to furnish...I'm sorry, it amends some obsolete language, takes it out, dealing with paper application forms, which is still...we're still in a cleanup process over the whole driver's license issue, where we went from paper forms, and so on, numbered, to the new process that we use that's basically electronic in nature, and much easier to work with. It also allows the department to furnish the Social Security number of an applicant when they apply for HAZMAT endorsement to the Transportation Security Administration, or its agent. Section 9