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FLOOR DEBATE

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in the other day and had an animal in his...at his ranch that they can't identify the brands because they've been two brands overlapped. So this is a problem with allowing different places to have the brands. With my own personal experience, if an animal I acquire is already branded, then I do not apply my brand to the same location but use another location where I've registered the brand. This makes identification much easier. At the present time, many owners are only allowed to brand on the hip area, and if they have acquired an animal that has been previously branded on the hip location, they have no alternative but to apply the brand in the same area, sometimes resulting in an indistinguishable blotch. Statutes should be in place to support and improve efficiency of commerce and our citizens who are engaged in commerce. The prohibition of new rib brands was enacted 14 years ago to increase the value of livestock. It didn't happen, and other states did not join in the effort. If the idea had increased the value of livestock, other states would probably have adopted the same policy. No other state has done so. It has been a detriment to those livestock owners that use hot-iron brandings as a means of identification on the vast cattle-producing areas of Nebraska. Branding is a necessary tool on western ranches. Not allowing the registration of rib brands denies the Brand Committee revenue and also locations to record new brands. Also, the present wording in statute places a hardship on brand owners who may inadvertently let their brand registration lapse. If a rib brand lapses, the owner can renew it at a rib location. Some of these brands have been in a family for three or four and sometimes more generations. A brand on any other area of an animal can be renewed if the owner inadvertently lets it lapse. It's unfair to treat brand owners differently based on where their animal...the brand is placed. LB 441 allows the Brand Committee to raise the fee for inspection in order to increase revenue. My amendment, LB 330, increases the revenue for the Brand Committee. The Brand Committee testified in support of the LB 330 and stated that in the past 14 years the committee has received 3,000 applications for new rib area brands. These have all been turned down because of the prohibition. Allowing registration of rib brands would not only increase the revenue, but will also make life easier for those livestock owners that use and need livestock brands. I urge your adoption of this amendment. Thank you.