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FLOOR DEBATE

March 29, 2005      LB 150

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Kremer. (Visitors introduced.) On with discussion. Senator Erdman, followed by Senator Baker and others.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, I rise in opposition to Senator Chambers' amendment. And I find some irony in this, and that is, Senator Chambers' amendment is an opt-in provision. There was an organization awhile back that tried to come up with a voluntary checkoff program, and their program was designed to be similar to what LB 150 was, and that was a program in which there was a mandatory fee collected, but a refund provision. When they found out that there wasn't going to be a willing partner in that effort, they were told that they had to do an opt-in provision. And so some of the people that are on the opposite side of this proposal, who are in favor of Senator Chambers' amendment, were actually the same people that drew up this similar idea years ago. When they found out that it was going to have to be an opt-in provision, they abandoned it as well, and they said it won't work. So here we are with a similar proposal, which those who would be opposing this piece of legislation based on an original intent that they originally came up with, they're actually saying that this is what they would prefer, knowing full well that it would eliminate the possibility of this program being effective. Little bit of irony, or maybe it's a planned effort. Senator Chambers had some fantastic comments earlier this morning about, up with democracy, and how that would be a great opportunity for us to be able to refund different things that we didn't agree with, or at least that's how I...how I took it. There have been some interesting developments in the U.S. Supreme Court in regards to the national beef checkoff case. One of the justices said that every time we pay general taxes, we're supporting government speech that we may not agree with. Absolutely, I can name a number of things, and probably so can you, of things maybe that this government or that the federal government has done that we wouldn't agree with, or maybe they have taken a position on behalf of an administration that we wouldn't agree with, yet we're still compelled to pay those taxes. This is different. This is a different setup, this is a different system. But at the same time, if we continue down that logic that Senator