

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

April 12, 2005 LB 480

had bills from the Transportation Committee that, as you know, the state receives highway money and in millions of dollars, probably hundreds of millions of dollars in highway money on an annual basis, and the federal government says that we want a consistent highway policy and in order to do that we're going to use a stick and a carrot approach. We're going to say that if states don't adopt billboard regulations or, excuse me, laws regulating the clutter of billboard next to the highways, they won't be able to get as much in highway funds. If a state doesn't adopt some form of a seat belt law, they won't be able to share in the highway funds. If a state doesn't adopt standards regarding drunken driving laws, they won't be able to share in highway funds. And what...the reason that the federal government does that, and you can probably come up with another 10 or 12 examples, if not more, of what the federal government does to encourage uniformity, and this bill is simply trying to do that...or this amendment, excuse me. Now, I will tell you that somehow I must have been busy or something, I don't know, and to be quite honest this amendment is not as uniform as it could or should be, and Senator Erdman later on has an amendment that I fully support and I do believe that that adds the uniformity that I've discussed, in that it would say that any community that adopts standards, ordinances, they're free to do that regarding smoking, but they should also know that the state has, as a core principle of this policy, that it should be consistent. And the reason I'm saying that is when we were discussing the amendment here earlier it's...there's a area in Lincoln that's not part of the city of Lincoln, and that's the State Fair Park, and what we have is an inconsistent policy in that, while you cannot smoke in places of employment in the city of Lincoln, including bars, restaurants and other workplaces, you can go across the street to this pocket. And I don't know how big State Fair Park is, but you can go across the street and you can play keno and have, as Senator Thompson mentioned, dinner and you can smoke there. And the State Fair Board has cleverly encouraged people to attend their enclave there, or conclave, for lack of a better word, by allowing the smoking and actually advertising, hey, come here and smoke. And so that's a perfect example of an inconsistent policy. We have the small area within a city, within a county that, while every...the area around it doesn't allow smoking, this little area does, and I