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April 12, 2005 LB 480

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Aguilar, followed by Senator Smith and five others.

SENATOR AGUILAR: Thank you, Mr. President and members. Again, I'm still opposed to this amendment. Because number one, it is punitive, irregardless of what Doctor... I mean, Senator Bourne says. Sometime in May...I'm going to make a prediction here, not to be too Nostradamus-like, but sometime in May, I predict that the city of Omaha and the city of Grand Island are going to pass stricter smoking bans than what LB 480 allows. think that's news to anybody. So that's what we're talking about. We're not talking about a small minority of people. We're talking about the three largest stand-alone communities in the state of Nebraska. And I'm not sure of the numbers, but I would rather guess that their population is probably more than half the state. That's the number of people that want stronger bans even than we have here. Senator Bourne's amendment wants I think that is to penalize them for having that desire. strictly wrong, entirely wrong. Senator Janssen spoke earlier the loss of tax revenues from people not buying cigarettes. I'd like to point out that I used to be a smoker. I smoked two packs a day at one point in my life. And I hated it when people told me I couldn't smoke in a specific area. And I'm ashamed to say I was probably very selfish and very rude and not considerate of other people's feelings at that time. I'm glad that's all beyond me at this point. But anyway, to move on with this, when I would go to church, I'd have to quit smoking for an hour. At the end of that hour, I'd leave church, I'd light up a cigarette immediately, smoke it, and then probably light up another one, because I felt I needed to catch up for all that time I missed out while I was in church not smoking. So LB 480 does not make people smoke less. It does not cause a reduction in tax revenues that we're all so worried about. But what it does do is not allow innocent people to be detrimentally by secondhand smoke. I think that's extremely important. And I think that needs to be where the focus of this discussion is. It is about the health of the people of the great state of Nebraska. Thank you, Mr. President. If I have any time remaining, I would offer it to either Senator Thompson or Senator Chambers, whoever chooses.