

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

April 12, 2005      LB 480

SENATOR THOMPSON: Okay. Thank you very much. Well, I have the answer to that question. (Laugh) The study...this is a news release from the American Cancer Society, dated May 15, 2003. The American Cancer Society today strongly criticized a misleading tobacco industry-funded study that compromises society data by using flawed methodology to falsely conclude environmental tobacco smoke may not affect lung cancer. Dr. James Enstrom, the author of the study published in the British American Journal (sic), received funding from a tobacco industry group linked to coordinated attempts to confuse the public about the dangers of secondhand smoke. And there is more information. But this is a tactic. A lot of the tactics we're hearing on the floor are typical of how these progressive efforts to protect the public from a known carcinogen, to protect the public and public health, are confused by things that have been published by the...by funding from the tobacco industry. This particular...president of...okey-dokey, epidemiology and surveillance research mentions that this grant failed to get a government grant, which is kind of unusual in the study of secondhand smoke. So don't be confused by these minority reports. There is so much evidence. It really just comes down to the issue of, what is the role of government in protecting public health? And we do it all the time. We do it all the time in the restaurant industry. We do it all the time in business, a lot of businesses, to protect public health. We protect restaurant patrons by having sanitation requirements, safety requirements. We protect the employees in numbers of ways, regarding their rights as workers. But we are putting this worker segment in a very dangerous situation by having to work eight hours, if that's their shift, or even longer for some people, in an atmosphere of secondhand smoke. It is dangerous. We set the standards. We're not asking a lot. We're just asking that small minority of smokers to not smoke in a restaurant while the public is present. There are...there is information from...I call it the organ information. Whether it's heart, lung, whatever, there's tremendous body of evidence, and all these organizations are supporting these smoke-free workplace bans, because it helps people be healthier. This triggers strokes, heart attacks, asthma. We have so many things that we can improve, and so much health that we can improve by