

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

May 5, 2005

LB 425

position of the state. If Senator Erdman and Senator Foley believe that the state ought to discriminate on this basis, they will vote against this amendment. And however way they want to try to characterize it, that's exactly what they're doing. Speaking of reality, we know that there's discrimination against gay and lesbian people. The Supreme Court knows it; they acknowledged it. Large companies throughout this country and in other nations have acknowledged it. So to be so parochial and narrow and backward in 2005 as to suggest that there's no discrimination against people based on sexual orientation is to be totally disconnected from reality. This amendment can only deal with the state. Senator Erdman knows, or if he doesn't I'm going to inform him, the budget that we build, it involves only the state and its entities. We cannot put in this budget bill something that affects the private sector. I have never said that's what this would do. I have said there is a problem that exists in this society. There are people who are employed by this state, there are people in this Legislature, who have an attitude, and some people will reduce it to action, which would be discriminatory against people based solely on their sexual orientation or their perceived, alleged, or rumored sexual orientation. Those types of attitudes are hurtful and productive of noting positive. This should be an inclusive state, and I have been doing things to try to see that that will happen. What Senator Foley does not understand and realize is that there would never be a Catholic priest praying over the Legislature if it hadn't been for me challenging the existence of a chaplain in the Legislature. A determination was made that it could not be limited to a person of one denomination. The anti-discrimination law on the books prohibits discrimination based on religion. Religion is a matter of choice. So those kinds of arguments are evasive, and I hope that you will adopt this amendment. And I'll tell you that that other 49-or-so will go away, and this is the most appropriate way to make this declaration. Madam President, I would ask for a call of the house, and I will take a machine vote.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. There has been a request for a call of the house. All those in favor would vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.