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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 425

Preister, followed by Senator Chambers, on the Foley amendment, AM1584.

SENATOR PREISTER: Thank you, honorable President, friends all. I stand in support of what Senator Howard is working on doing to provide some information, some education, and some treatment for a population that's certainly in need of it. I certainly understand and appreciate where Senator Foley is coming from in trying to provide some services to women that he equally believes strongly need that services. And both, I think, from each of their differing views, is approaching this is a way that is very dear to both of them, and that they really believe in and want to do some good things for. I agree with Senator Thompson that I'd prefer to see a straight-up vote on Senator Howard's amendment. The Ogallala Sioux tribe on the Pine Ridge Reservation has a major problem. I can't say why the Native Americans there are more susceptible to the disease of alcoholism, but I know that there have been a lot of reasons that have driven those people to alcoholism and to try and escape. And I know that 11,000 cans of beer are sold in Whiteclay every single day. And Whiteclay is a village of only 14 people. Those 14 people, if they were the ones consuming that alcohol, would certainly be doing a lot of drinking. Four million cans a year of beer are sold, largely to the Native Americans, these Ogallala Sioux tribal members, who, the largest portion of their reservation is in South Dakota, but who are also Nebraska citizens, and part of that reservation is also in Nebraska. The state of Nebraska realizes, just in sales tax, \$165,000 annually from the sale of that beer. I'm grateful to the Appropriations Committee that they're at least appropriating some funds this year to provide for some law enforcement in Whiteclay. We have a community that only has off-sale liquor licenses. That means that liquor can only be sold to be consumed off the premises. In the village of Whiteclay, there's no legal place to consume alcohol. And yet, all of this alcohol is being purchased there, and people are drinking it in the streets, people are falling down drunk. We've had unsolved murders in the community. And this has gone on for year after year after year, despite Nebraskans for Peace and many other organizations trying to bring attention to it, legislation being introduced to try and draw attention to it. That consumption of