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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 117

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, I had opposed Senator Aguilar's bill, which Senator Bourne is going to insert into LB 117. Too many times a fad will develop when society, due to publicity or if congresspersons or others are talking about a matter, will catch the public's eye and, in turn, the attention of other politicians. Since meth is the latest in a series of fads, that is becoming an item that has taken on a life of its own. The current law relative to child abuse says the following in pertinent part: A person commits child abuse if he or she knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causes or permits a minor child to be placed in a situation that endangers his or her life, or physical or mental health. I don't think just because methamphetamine is the monster of the day that you need to put this language into the child abuse statute--place in or near the processing, cooking, or manufacturing of methamphetamine. If that endangers the child's life or the child's physical or mental health, it's child abuse. You don't say that if a parent or a custodian or guardian of a child is changing a tire on an 18-wheel truck, it shall be child abuse to place that child in a position where, if the truck falls off the jack, it will fall and crush the child. You don't have in the statute anything that says if a child is left intentionally in a burning building. You do not itemize everything that can be a threat to the child's life or health. I think amphetamine is a problem, but I'm not going to consent to it being used to clutter the statute every place imaginable where the term "methamphetamine" or the manufacture of methamphetamine might could be placed. You could make it a crime to allow, knowingly, intentionally, or negligently, the manufacture of methamphetamine in a public school, but that's not...nobody is putting that in the law. Why not? The fact that it's not in the law does not mean that such conduct would be allowable. There are other statutes that would cover that. This portion of the amendment should be rejected, so what I'm going to request is a division of the question regarding this amendment, AM1592.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Chambers and Senator Bourne, would you please come forward? Senator Aguilar, would...the Chair rules that AM1592 is divisible. Mr. Clerk, please read the division.