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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 538, 703

Judiciary Committee. That bill was designated as a Speaker priority bill and was advanced on an 8-0 vote by your Judiciary Committee. The provisions of LB 703 are entirely consistent with the community corrections effort, and I endorse the addition of these provisions to this bill. And Mr. President, with that, I would like to yield the balance of my time to Senator McDonald to explain her LB 703, which is contained in AM1711. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Brashear. Senator McDonald, about 8, 40.

SENATOR McDONALD: Mr. President, members of the body, as amended by the Judiciary Committee, LB 703 gives the Board of Parole authority to grant medical parole to a committed offender who is terminally ill or permanently incapacitated based on their medical condition. Medical parole would not be available to offenders under a sentence of death or life imprisonment. The Department of Corrections would identify offenders who may be eligible, based on their medical records. The Board of Parole then reviews the medical, institutional, and criminal records, in addition to any other exams or investigations ordered by the Board. The decision to grant medical parole and establish conditions of release belongs solely to the Board of Parole. And let me repeat that: The decision to grant medical parole and establish conditions of release belong solely to the Board of Parole. The Board of Parole may place conditions of release on medical parole, including placement for medical treatment. The term of medical parole is for the remainder of the offender's sentence. The Parole Board may be revoked if a person's medical condition improves to the extent that he or she would not be eligible for medical parole. Medical parole may be revoked if a person violates any condition of release established by the Parole Board. What this says is it just gives the Parole Board another option to parole someone who is terminally ill, and that would allow them to have the remainder of their life at home. And as you and I know, those last few hours, months, and weeks of a person's life, if they could spend that at home with their loved ones when they are at no threat to anyone in society, that allows them to die in some sort of dignity. And that's basically what my bill, LB 703, would have