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FLOOR DEBATE

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prominent Nebraska law enforcement officer has stated, these people are cowards with guns, and the last thing they want is for their intended victims to be possibly armed against them. John Stossel was on TV just a few weeks ago with a program, talking about myths; guns was one of those. He had people on camera in prison who said they were more afraid of an armed citizen than of an armed police officer. Secondly, violent crime will not increase, will most likely decrease, and LB 454 does not, as is sometimes alleged, take us back to the days of the Wild West, but does provide a measure of equality to folks in their daily lives and legitimate businesses, who find themselves threatened by those who might take advantage of strength, numbers, or a weapon to harm them. With LB 454, these innocent citizens at least have the chance of surviving unharmed an assault on their person or family, and that is the intention of what we're doing. We want to teach people to survive. It is not to kill people. It is to survive an assault on your person. There is no genetic defect or other shortcoming among Nebraskans that disqualifies them from having a self-defense option open to them that is now enjoyed by citizens in 46 other states. We all know that Nebraskans are honest,...

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: One minute.

SENATOR COMBS: ...responsible, hard-working individuals, many if not most of whom have all grown up around guns, and most are comfortable and responsible with them. There's absolutely no reason to expect that our experience with a concealed carry law here in Nebraska would be any different than in our sister states. At the outset of this debate ten years ago, only about 23 states had concealed carry permits. We were warned at that time by those in opposition that permitholders would wreak havoc in society and use these weapons to instigate violent crimes against other people. This did not happen. Texas Land Commissioner, former Senator Jerry Patterson, author of the Texas bill which took effect ten years ago, faxed a message to me yesterday, which says in part, the concealed handgun law is not just about personal safety. Perhaps even deeper than its roots in constitutional freedom, the concealed handgun law is about trust. The legacy of this bill is grounded in a concept that our government should place its trust in us, and not the