

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

March 1, 2006

LB 478

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Cornett.

SENATOR CORNETT: Yes, in part, I'm going to respond to you, and in part to Senator Chambers. Yes, we have an expanding field in defense contractors, and that is the point I've been trying to make. The companies have moved here or are looking at relocating here because we've been assigned missions. The problem is they cannot fill the jobs because of our tax burden. Because of the fact we are one of only five states that taxes the military retirement, they cannot bring these highly specialized people to the state. Between just 9 of the contractors out of 33, they had over 200 jobs open, and that number has increased particularly with some of the companies looking to expand here. I have been...this was a very blunt statement made to me at what's called the SCAPR Group, which is a group of defense contractors that meets to discuss issues in their field, that if we cannot fill these jobs, we are leaving. Senator Janssen's question is, do these jobs create more jobs? Yes, they do. When the people relocate here, they need homes. They need services. They need to buy groceries. It is economic growth any way you look at it if you can fill these jobs. They will be paying taxes on this high salary. We're not giving them anything for free. They have to pay their taxes on the salary that they will be earning. Senator Chambers, if you have a moment, can you yield to a question?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes, I will.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator.

SENATOR CORNETT: You have stated that you're here today to defend the military personnel that we are not exempting in this bill. Am I correct?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I said it's playing favorites and I will not support doing that.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And if your next question is whether I would exempt all of these pensions, I've said, no, I will not do that.