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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 994

SENATOR JENSEN: They brought this amendment to us, and we had a briefing with all seven members, and they outlined what the federal requirements were, as to Nebraska's law. Then they brought forth this amendment with this information on it, and along with that, they gave us a sheet, which I think you have on your desk also, outlining the justification for this language.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I want you to tell me what it is. What's the justification? You know that the Nebraska Constitution prohibits involuntary servitude, unless it's for punishment for a crime. Are these people considered to be criminals, so that they can be held to perform involuntary servitude?

SENATOR BOURNE: One minute.

SENATOR JENSEN: Well, the whole process here, the Welfare-to-Work program, was to encourage individuals to find employment.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: So the encouragement here is to say, if you are not successful in finding employment, we can make you work for a business without pay. Why won't the business pay them, if the business is going to extract work from them?

SENATOR JENSEN: Well, I think in most cases they would receive payment for that work.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I'm not satisfied with that. I'm going to turn on my light again.

SENATOR BOURNE: (Visitors introduced.) Senator Chambers, you're recognized to speak.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Erdman was trying to give me an explanation, and he said I should continue asking Senator Jensen, because I asked him would he want to respond, so maybe he will on his own time. You're trying to reach a level of 50 percent, in terms of what these recipients are doing, in order to comply with George "Simon Legree" Bush. Simon Legree was a supervisor or foreman on a slave plantation, and he was known for his cruelty to black people who were owned