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FLOOR DEBATE

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and deliberately here is to put together a comprehensive bill, at least 18 months in the making, working with the Board of Pharmacy for the state of Nebraska, but also inviting national representatives of the various wholesaling distributors. They came from as far away as California, but also were represented locally by oxygen distributors. One of the things that we found is that there were so many of these technical aspects. One of the things is that a distributor pointed out that we had not allowed for joint ownership or making of a pharmaceutical. So that was corrected. There were others that were made in different manners, so that we had to allow for this, as well. Getting back to the one about our oxygen distributors right here in the state, technically, oxygen is a drug, and so we had to recognize that, and so in this you will see several paragraphs dealing with this. Now, due to the fact that pharmaceutical manufacturers are regulated by the FDA, this also played a part, and it is the intent of this legislation to exempt these manufacturers and subsidiaries because they are covered under the FDA and their licensing requirements would then be duplicative. For example, some manufacturers ship directly to the provider. These facilities are regulated by the FDA and they would not have to go through the licensing process again. Again, we're trying to blend all of these different entities. Now here's what's in the bill: The Board of Pharmacy will set the rules and regulations. It will do criminal and business background checks. It will put the name of the person in charge. Now here's an interesting statistic: 90 percent of the pharmaceuticals are distributed by three wholesalers. There are 6,000 that do the other 10 percent, and 100 of these don't qualify for belonging to the National--what do they call it--Health Care Management Association. Now what the intent is to do here is to establish what we would call a pedigree, and a pedigree is an historical marker from the manufacturing site through each of the distributing people along the wholesale line. This would start out with a paper trail that we ordinarily would have, but the thing that is neat and kind of caught my eye is that, starting in the year 2008, this will be done electronically. When you go to the grocery store and bring an item to the counter, there is a bar code there that is scanned. What will be possible in the year 2008 is that each of these pharmaceutical products will have a bar code on the