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FLOOR DEBATE

March 29, 2006

LB 99, 489

introduced as...or, excuse me, last year was introduced as LB 99. It's a bill that's been around here for about five or six years now and this will be the first time that we actually get to have a debate relative to elevator safety on the floor of the Legislature. I introduce LB 99 in the interest of public safety, consumer protection, and industry accountability. The Business and Labor Committee voted LB 99 out of committee at a 5 to 0 vote, 2 members were absent. There were three proponent testifiers, two opponent testifiers, and one neutral testifier at the committee hearing. The purpose of the proposed Conveyance Safety Act is to provide for the safest form of vertical transportation possible in the state. The use of unsafe and defective elevator devices imposes substantial probability of serious and preventable injury to both the riding public and the people who install and maintain this delicate machinery. There were 207 employees killed in a ten-year period. And of those 207, 146 of those killed involved those working on or near elevators. The remaining 61 deaths in the United States were passengers. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that there are 17,000 accidents each year requiring hospitalization. A study revised in March of 2004 by the Council to Protect Workers' Rights showed that most of the accidents are preventable when it comes to elevator safety. Utilization of the latest edition of elevator safety codes, continuing education will provide the most current protections which promote enhanced pedestrian safety. Through required training and education on the most recent codes, this will establish minimum standards for elevator personnel. The bill provides for the licensings of both contractors and mechanics in the conveyance industry. As amended, AM2344, the legislation will eliminate the application of this legislation to the installation of platform lifts and stairway chair lifts, both in homes and commercial settings. Thus, the applicability of this legislation to private residences is to require inspection of full-blown elevators only and those that are installed in homes. The amendment is quite lengthy. I'll go through it section by section quickly. Section 1 is a citation. Section 2, definitions within the act. Section 3 creates the Conveyance Advisory Committee. Section 4 delegates the powers afforded to this committee. Section 5 delineates the qualifications of the state elevator inspector. Section 6, it creates the Conveyance