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FLOOR DEBATE

March 29, 2006 LB 99, 489

SENATOR CUDABACK: You've heard the opening, Senator Beutler's amendment. Open for discussion. Senator Jensen.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I would certainly support Senator Beutler's amendment and I will support LB 489. But I cannot support AM2344. AM2344 is essentially LB 99 that was heard this year and it is a bill that has been introduced the last several years here in the Legislature. But to me, it is a method to, and kind of heavy-handedly, to put not only the service of an elevator but also I think is going to have detrimental effect to some of the rural areas. Now certainly, I live in Omaha, Nebraska, and I've been a contractor for some 45 years and, yes, I have built buildings where elevators have been installed and I would never cause or want to be part of anything that the elevator was not installed correctly. And I've always used licensed inspectors also...or, not inspectors, but journeymen who work on these particular conveyance systems. But I do have a concern when we start talking about and restricting who can do the work, who can do the installation, who can do the repair, who can even take them out if they're no longer needed. And that does cause me some heartburn. There is a...one must first gain three years of work experience in the conveyance industry, three years. This clause essentially bans out-of-state mechanics from installing conveyances in the state of Nebraska, thereby depriving customers, consumers any choice whatsoever. I think of some of our rural areas like Scottsbluff, Valentine, and what they would have to go through to get a qualified mechanic even to work on an elevator. Once you have gained three years in the conveyance industry, moreover, one still must satisfy one or two additional requirements mandated by the amendment in order to become a licensed elevator mechanic. Both options would essentially be controlled by the International Union of Elevator Contractors, namely, successful completion of a written test formulated by the Conveyance Advisory Committee or a committee that will eventually be dominated by union members, or presenting a certificate of having passed an elevator mechanic examination as provided by the National Elevator Industry Program (sic), which is, again, a union apprentice program. And according to Earl Baker of NEIP (sic), only about 40 to 50 persons in the entire state of Nebraska have completed the union's current