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FLOOR DEBATE

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to this body before, and I was honored to be chosen to chair a task force that was created by the Nebraska Legislature on the missions and responsibilities of the Nebraska State Patrol several years ago when we had added so many things to their lists of tasks that they weren't able to perform their mission-related duties due to the fact that, with a number of added responsibilities, there wasn't sufficient funding to be able to do everything that we require of the State Patrol. I felt this amendment was one that was appropriate to point to on the bill. The other ones, I felt, were really, really important and were brought to me by the chiefs of police in the area that I serve out of other concerns. And I think they're a part of a number of problems with this bill. This one, I guess because I've served on the Appropriations Committee and because I chaired that task force, I think we need to make sure that these costs are appropriate. And rather than set in statute an amount that in five years may or may not be sufficient to pay for the reissuing of the permit with all the requirements that are in the bill, that it would be appropriate to add this amendment on to get this piece straightened out. And the flip side of that is that I don't think we should be charging more than what it actually costs to issue these licenses either. So hopefully this would be a fair fee, one that could be adjusted based on actual costs, costs to get the information that needs to be there, one piece of which I think is quite a challenge and that is to deal with the issue of people who have mental illness, people who shouldn't be carrying weapons concealed due to the fact that they've been convicted...or not convicted but found mentally incompetent in other states, and that's part of the search that needs to happen in order for the Patrol to be assuring the public that this is safe. For those of you who are somewhat new to this process, we've been debating this for many years. And when the bill first was brought, it was placing this responsibility with the sheriffs. And I've spent a lot of time talking with the sheriff in the county that I represent about the problems that he saw in having...in becoming a shall issue state. To politically pull off that level of concern from the sheriffs who knew, who had better access to us, the proponents of this wisely were able to and other Governors didn't allow it but the current Governor had, or this must have been Governor Johanns, put this under the State Patrol, politically making it