

April 14, 1980

LB 1004

is adopted, and we now vote on the Dworak amendment as amended. Senator Landis. We are discussing the Dworak amendment as amended.

SENATOR LANDIS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I rise to oppose the Dworak amendment. I served on the committee that heard this bill. If you haven't heard before, this is LB 891 dressed up and come to the dance as LB 1004. We are throwing this in here at this late date because we have to jockey the schedule to make way for Senator Dworak's priorities. Let me say, number one, that in the committee it was clear that this will not mean any money savings to the state. There are no dollars savings here by a cutting back in benefits in this way that the cost of the group package doesn't shift one iota in the event we pass and enact into practice 1004. Let me say also that I think one of the discouraging features of this bill, and I am not going to argue the legal niceties, but it seems an attempt to reach into the benefit package of the individual and coerce them to use their money, use their benefits in certain ways. For example, can you imagine a bill that would say state employees may not have... may not obtain abortions. Of course, we would all react against that. However, we have just passed a bill that says, you may not have it paid for by the state in the form of an abortion coverage and also because insurers do not have this program and there is no such coverage available and we don't mandate the coverage now, thanks to Senator Stoney's amendment, you will not be able to insure it in that way. What LB 1004 now says, bottom line, absent all the language is, state employees may not insure for abortions, bottom line. That is it. Now if we pass that language that says, you as a state employee may not insure against the possibility of an abortion, it would be unconstitutional and I don't think the body would support it. I certainly think the industry, the insurance industry, would be opposed to it because of its mandating philosophy and we have the private enterprise philosophy in a moment to argue against such a bill. But in a different guise, that is what we have got here in LB 1004. Now why is that an offensive principle? Well, you know, there is a certain amount of morality in our legislation; laws against robbery, laws against burglary, laws against murder are moral judgments. I don't doubt that. The law moralizes all the time. However, we proceed from commonly held or consensus held moral positions when we enact those kinds of laws. There is no serious or significant segment of the American population that doesn't want a law against murder.

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have one minute left.

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