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Legislature to hear child porn bill

A bill to outlaw child pornography in the state was advanced to the legislative floor on a 7-0 vote by the Nebraska Legislature's Judiciary Committee Tuesday.

Child pornography is not a problem in Nebraska, according to Omaha Sen. Larry Stoney, the bill's sponsor, but the bill is an attempt to keep it from becoming a problem. He estimated one-half million children nationwide have been sexually exploited in magazines, slides, films and photographs.

LB829 carries a one-to 20-year prison sentence and/or \$25,000 fine for a first-offense conviction of publishing, selling or distributing obscene material involving children under age 16. A second offense carries a prison term of one to 50 years.

Omaha Sen. Ernest Chambers, who for years has tried to convince the Legislature to ban the death penalty in the state, said although he still did not advocate the death penalty as punishment for any offense, "if there were something which ought to carry the death penalty, that (child pornography) would be it."

Chambers called sexual abuse of children "the worst, most vicious kind of child abuse there is." He said children's participation in the sex acts shown in some pornographic magazines could "twist" their minds and "distort the purpose of reproductive functions."

Stoney said he obtained several magazines from the Los Angeles Police Department depicting children performing sex acts with each other. Some magazines were "Boy Scout Sex Manual," "Night Boys of Amsterdam," and "Boys Who Love Boys." He said he obtained one such magazine from the Omaha Police Department.

Barbara Gaiter, executive director of the Nebraska Civil Liberties Union testified in support of the section of the bill which would prohibit publication of child pornography but said the section prohibiting the distribution of such materials may be unconstitutional.

Richard Pocras of the Citizens for Decent Exposure and Jim Cunningham of the Nebraska Catholic Conference also testified in support of the bill.

The committee also heard testimony on LB597, which would require opaque covers over magazines and books depicting nudity. Falls City Sen. Nelson Merz presented an amendment which would exempt "legal" newspapers from the provisions of the bill.

He said the amendment was proposed to him by members of the news media. The committee took no action on the bill or amendment.

The committee advanced LB618, introduced by Chambers, which would provide immunity from prosecution for prostitutes who testified against pimps.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

M	A	C	E	S	R	A	T	S	A	C	A	D		
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T	A	M	S	L	E	A	R	E	A	S	E	S		
S	H	E	A	S	O	M	S	R	E	E	D	Y		

Cut-up . . .

Continued from Page 1

The bed of a pickup will hold only about half a cord, he said. But a pickup load usually is sold for the price of a cord. A cord is a stack of wood four feet tall by four feet wide by eight feet deep, or 120 cubic feet of wood.

Johnson said he has personally customized his truck by building a rack to increase the capacity of his truck.

He points proudly to the knotholed planks held together by two-by-fours which extend above the body of the truck and explains that besides being a skilled woodcutter he is "one hell of a carpenter."

But he does not hold himself above the dishonest practices which he says are common among woodcutters.

"I probably sell as bad of loads as anyone. My corruption is in quality. I've sold some green wood and I sell the wrong kinds sometimes," Johnson said. "Most people cheat on quantity but my loads are pretty close to cords."

Johnson started selling wood last year while he was in school. He cuts the wood on land near Seward, owned by his father and his grandfather and sells it door-to-door in east Lincoln.

Johnson said he finds selling wood depressing. People often are rude; sometimes they will not even open their door to him, he said.

"I've had to kick and spit on a couple of doors when people wouldn't even talk to me," he said. "Not enough to damage anything, just enough to let them know I don't

like being treated like that."

After his experiences as a woodcutter, Johnson said, he never will live in the suburbs.

"Too many people chain their lives down to expensive houses with nice yards, fireplaces and a double garage filled with expensive cars just because they haul down enough money to afford those things."

Johnson said he likes and respects most of the people he has met while selling wood. Most of all, he said, he likes their money.

"The thing I like most about this business is the \$200 balance I have in my checking account," Johnson said, waving a black checkbook. "I like being outside cutting wood a lot, but I got into this business because I thought I could make money."

It all began last fall with a \$750 investment, Johnson said. The business has yielded a gross profit of approximately \$2,500, little of which he has been able to save, he said.

"I thought I would make more money, and was not aware of the burdens and hardships of going into business for myself."

Johnson said he is in business to make enough money to quit as soon as possible.

"The happiest day of my woodcutting career will be the day I can quit."

Johnson is going to sell the rest of a stockpile of wood he already has cut and then sell his truck and go to Colorado to ski for a few days, he said.

"Then I'm going to move to the west coast—they have real trees out there."

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