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**(Neb.)-Lawmakers Preparing Buy Nebraska' Bill For Session**

By: Dennis and Kathi Brown Posted at: 12/02/2012 07:45 AM

By GRANT SCHULTE

Associated Press

LINCOLN, Nebraska (AP) - Lawmakers are expected to consider a bill next year that would require Nebraska to give preference to in-state companies when awarding government contracts.

Omaha Sen. Heath Mello has drafted "Buy Nebraska" legislation to introduce when lawmakers convene in January. Mello says Nebraska could reap benefits if it gave preference to in-state contractors when awarding contracts for specific goods and services. He says state preferences would help recycle state tax dollars back into the Nebraska economy.

Mello introduced a bill last year that would have required the purchase of American-made iron, steel and manufactured goods by Nebraska state agencies.

Dewayne Docken, president of an Omaha-based data-entry firm, supports in-state preferences. Docken notes his company has lost a government contract to an out-of-state firm that underbid him by less than \$20.