

February 1, 1974

SENATOR SIMPSON: Mr. President and members of the Legislature I really don't know if I'm talking for or against the amendment but I would like just to have a little input that looking at the aged and the handicapped in Lincoln, probably would not be able to come under this classification because they are not able to either go to the bus stop to get on the bus, or when they get there they are not able to get on. So, we in Lincoln have a special transportation system and I wouldn't want this to be upset by this amendment whereby these people can call and make an appointment that a small mini bus comes to their home and takes them where they wish to go, then at a certain time picks them up and takes them back. I have really become aware of this problem because immediately across the street from me there are two elderly ladies who can get around, but cannot walk three or four blocks at one time to the bus stop and they have been forced to take the taxi in order to go any place, and they come right up by the door to put them in. Now, we have this mini bus who comes and they usually are gone one day a week to take care of their shopping and so on. He picks them up in the morning at a certain time and helps them in, and then he again picks them up on the other end at the time and brings them right back to the door and this would no way fall under the classification and I don't want to interrupt this service, at least in Lincoln.

PRESIDENT: Senator Mahoney. Actually we have under debate, in case we have lost sight of it, a Carpenter amendment which is a substitute for the Mahoney amendment to LB762. Senator Mahoney.

SENATOR MAHONEY: Mr. President, thank you for giving me the fair warning so I do not wander off the track. Senator Simpson we will not in any manner disturb your very fine plan in Lincoln, there would be no intention of this amendment to do so. You should be complimented in Lincoln for being pioneers in this area, and if this amendment would do this type of harm I would truly be the first one up here opposing it. Senator Clark has a very fine and good bill, and it has been a good bill and it will continue to be a good bill. The only thing that Senator Carpenter and myself is trying to do is to improve the situation in this bill in which it is germane and we have the opportunity to extend to these people which there are 200,000 of them, who are citizens, who built this state and who built this country on their taxes. As I mentioned yesterday in the Legislature, we do everything in the world for other groups, and there are those of us in this Legislature who are interested in the higher education, in the secondary and elementary education. We are interested in many, many projects, and so be this. This is good. But also there are the forgotten people and they are the elderly. 85% of the elderly people in this state when a poll was taken, 85% Senator Proud, 85% said they would take more than one trip downtown if they could have a lower bus fare. So what we are saying to the elderly people that keeping the rate at 35¢ that we are prohibiting them from possibly on Monday going down and doing their shopping. On Wednesday visiting a doctor which is necessary when you become aged. Possibly on Friday there is another doctor's visit. And this is 10¢. We are allowing these people to fill these empty seats and the elderly would be traveling in the hours of possibly 9:00 or 10:00. These are hours in which there are empty bus seats. And so it's very important to know here that what we're doing by this amendment is beginning a pioneering effort for the elderly. Oh yes, Senator Stahmer, we're going to try to help the handicapped. And we do help the handicapped in many of these bills. Sometimes we can't do all these things at once. We