

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Morehead did an excellent job of describing what this bill does. I will try to be as brief as she is. My amendment says that this law will apply wherever alcoholic beverages are sold, not just where they are consumed, as the bill says, but wherever they are sold. So that we will be taking in not just cocktail lounges, restaurants, and bars, but all the quick shops, convenient marts and everything will have to have someone 21 or older. I have a letter here which I will not read to you, perhaps you all got it, where the Mothers Against Drunk Drivers support this particular amendment, and with that, I would urge the body to adopt the amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the Higgins amendment. Senator Haberman.

SENATOR HABERMAN: Mr. President, members of the body, I would like to read a letter to you that was handed out last February from Russell Kelly in Omaha. Mr. Kelly says, "I was at the legislative committee hearing on LB 395 which would require a 21-year-old person to be in a bar when 19-year olds and older are serving liquor on the premises. I can see what the Legislature is trying to accomplish. However, I don't think that you should impose this upon the on-sale premise without imposing it upon the off-sale license holders. I run a place and have a 19-year-old son who I use to operate our establishment part time. My wife and I generally are not there when he is operating our bar. I think it has been pretty well established that minors are more inclined to sell packaged products to other minors for off-sale consumption. If this is the case, then this bill should apply to those places also. Many establishments across the state are family owned businesses and use 19-year olds and older members of their family to assist them in the business. This provides part-time employment for the members of the family and the parents are not always on the premise. This bill will be an extreme hardship upon many of the licensees in the state." Now here is the point of his letter. "If the policy of the Legislature is to have 21-year old on the premises at all times that liquor is being sold, I probably would not object. However, to single out the on premise sales, namely Class C licenses, seems totally unfair. I would much prefer not to have this legislation passed. However, if you are