

SENATOR PETERSON: No, I haven't. We just come up with this amendment in the last day or two and just got it down. I know there has been some...there was a serious bus accident, lost a lot of children down in southern Texas about a year, year and a half ago. I can't remember how many killed but they do happen.

SENATOR HORGAN: Well, do you know how many children have died, say, since 1986 in automobile accidents in the State of Nebraska?

SENATOR PETERSON: No, I do not.

SENATOR HORGAN: Well, the figures are I think kind of enlightening because the number of children killed in automobile accidents runs in the hundreds from 1986 to today, all of them in automobiles, not one in a school bus. The safest ride a child can take is in a school bus. We haven't had a child die in the State of Nebraska from a school bus accident probably as far back as we are able to determine sometime maybe in the 1960s. Each year dozens of children die in automobile accidents in the State of Nebraska. In 1987, 95 school buses were involved in accidents, no children died, but there were 62 children or 19 children killed in motor vehicle accidents, and each year after that, the same statistics are the same, and I think it is just important to recognize that this bill does not require the manufacturers to change anything. If you have an automobile, and I think that is an important point to remember, if you have an automobile that doesn't come equipped with seat belts, say it was built in the 1950s, you are not required by this bill to put seat belts in. We are not requiring anybody to put seat belts in. We are just telling you to use the vehicle as it comes equipped. The bill as amended by the committee says front seat passenger will wear a safety belt, and in a school bus the front seat passenger is the bus driver and the bus driver has a safety belt. They come equipped that way and will be required to wear a safety belt. I don't believe that this amendment is going to enhance the bill. It is going to require, you know, if the amendment were to be attached and the bill passed, none of the school buses in the State of Nebraska would be acceptable as they currently are. There is no state in the country that requires school buses to have safety belts in them. The evidence proves without question that safety belts are not...there is not a problem with children riding in school buses. The problem is with children riding in automobiles, and