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FLOOR DEBATE

April 3, 2006 LB 79

SENATOR BAKER: Yes, I would.

SENATOR FISCHER: Senator Baker, as I read your amendment, I guess I don't see a problem with it. I think it really helps in rural areas. But let me clarify this with you and maybe you could answer some questions on that. According to your amendment, if a professional engineer who's licensed would be employed by the city or contracted by the city to look at one of these crossings and if that engineer then determines that the crossing is needed, the crossing remains. Is that correct?

SENATOR BAKER: That's correct. And let me expand on that a little bit. It was actually crossing in Senator Stuthman's district, I think at Columbus. an elevator, that brought this amendment about and they helped us with it and agreed to it. That's what we needed to do.

SENATOR FISCHER: Thank you, Senator Baker. Because of this amendment, I would support the amendment and then the bill because I think that takes care of some of the concerns in my area. It still allows cities and towns and counties the opportunity to keep some of those crossings open and they have the avenue with this amendment to do so. So thank you, Madam President.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Fischer. We are on the amendment, Transportation Committee amendment. Senator Baker, I don't see any other lights on. You can close if you'd like.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Madam President and members. I've got to answer a couple questions Senator Loudon posed. Number one, I doubt you have public crossings in the Sandhills more often than...within a quarter of mile of each other. I don't think that's the case. And we're talking here only public crossings, not...yes, public crossings, not private crossings. Senator Fischer brought up a good point. If you don't want this crossing closed, all you have to do is get a professional engineer to sign off on this thing, says I'm familiar with it, take it to the city, the county, whoever has jurisdiction over the road that this crossing is on. You can waive this requirement. And not all crossings are perpendicular; that some