

SENATOR WESELY: Well I have some questions about this amendment. I'd be willing to go along with it, but I don't see the point. First off, I don't think that the ten percent is an undue burden on the railroads. I think that they ought to have some responsibility for paying at least part of the costs in these projects, and if it hasn't been a problem in the past, I think we're giving them a break by this amendment. At least, that's my initial impression, and I'm going to ask Senator DeCamp to respond to that. The other point is if we...okay, if we give them this break on the ten percent and expect them to pick up the maintenance costs in lieu of that ten percent involvement, and they're already paying for that anyway, then there's no added expense to the railroad, and they aren't really having to trade off a little bit on that. So I don't see where we're really gaining anything, Senator DeCamp. If you could respond and take the rest of my time?

SENATOR DeCAMP: Sure. Senator Wesely, you have to focus on the problem. The problem is not can you punish a railroad, can you do this or that, but can you get a goll darned crossing built and under the present system you can't. So if you want to build crossings, that's one thing. If you want to sit here and have diatribes on how we're going to make the railroads pay this or that, that's a separate thing. I'm suggesting the stated intent of the legislation was to build railroad crossings where they're needed. The method I'm offering you will get them built. Under the present state law as Senator Cullan quite clearly stated, there is no requirement for them to maintain these things at full cost. They only have to pay half, but they have been doing the full cost. Now if we build a bunch more crossings, they might start bucking on paying their other part of that. We lock them in to maintaining these new crossings, so there is a definite gain...advantage gained there.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. With that explanation, I'm going to go along with a compromise. I have some questions about it, but I think it's probably reasonable and I think it might encourage some projects that haven't been built that should have been built, and I'll go along with that compromise.

PRESIDENT: The Chair would like to introduce from Senator Sieck's district some 47 fourth graders, 2 teachers, and 9 mothers from Seward Elementary Grade School, Marilyn Peter and Rebecca Ward, teachers, and JoAnn Sieck is one of the mothers, and Jeff Sieck, grandson of Senator Harold Sieck is a member of that class. They're up here in the