

March 3, 1980

LB 672

session. I introduced a bill to provide mandatory automobile liability insurance coverage. That is LB 944 and it has been heard by the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee. Included in that bill was this last section designed to beef up our existing financial responsibility laws. There was a public hearing on it. Nobody testified against this section. Nobody testified in favor of this section but at least it has already been exposed to the public for their comments and viewpoints if they chose to make any. I should tell you right now one of the appalling facts about our whole financial responsibility program is a statistic from the Department of Motor Vehicles which says that 20% of the drivers in this state who are involved in automobile accidents are without insurance coverage, 20%, one-fifth. Your chances of being hit are such that you have a 20% chance that the person who hits you will not have insurance coverage and our enforcement of the financial responsibility laws has broken down and we are not getting the drivers' licenses from the people who didn't have the insurance coverage or cannot establish proof of financial responsibility. This little amendment is designed to increase our opportunities at getting drivers' licenses. That is all it does.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Nichol.

SENATOR NICHOL: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature, here we go again. We had a hearing recently having to do with decriminalization of alcoholism and who wasn't abiding by the law? The Omaha Police Department. They were advised by their legal staff, whatever it is, that they didn't have to do it. Here again, apparently when the Omaha Police Department doesn't want to do something, they just plain old don't want to do it. I heartily support Senator Johnson's amendment because perhaps we will get them to do something that they ought to be doing anyway and aren't doing just because they don't want to. Now it was brought out at the hearing that because of the decriminalization of alcoholism their workload went down 42%. I don't know whether that is true or not. I doubt it but if it did then they should have plenty of money to do this without having any problem financially. I suggest that we bear down again on the Omaha Police Department and make them do some things they ought to be doing anyway.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Kremer.

SENATOR KREMER: Mr. Chairman, very briefly, only to support Senator Johnson's amendment to the bill. If we are going to have a law, let's see that it is enforced. A lot