

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I am looking at the article that was handed out by Senator Hoagland and Senator Koch and as I look on the second page I am going to take the argument that they offered. There was an individual named Robert Grant who was the Nebraska Roads Department's statistical analyst and he said the Omaha interstate has 1.19 fatalities for one hundred million vehicle miles while the rest of Nebraska urban interstate has had 1.30 fatalities per one hundred million. So it would seem that Omaha has a lesser rate of fatalities than the rest of the urban interstate in the state. If you look at the entire picture based on this article on the front page it says there have been, I think, nine fatalities in the area being discussed since 1972. Now it is bad to play numbers when you are talking about the lives of people but nevertheless, from 1972 to 1981 represents nine years. There have been nine fatalities in nine years which can hardly be considered catastrophic. This number of accidents could be caused by any of a number of circumstances besides the rate of speed at which a vehicle is moving. So what I think should have been done by Senators Labeledz, Koch and Hoagland is to get those nine fatalities and demonstrate that it was the rate of speed at which the vehicle was traveling that caused the accident. Nobody will argue that a car striking an obstacle at a lower rate of speed will be less seriously harmed than one travelling at a higher rate but what we are talking about is the movement of traffic on an interstate system designed to move traffic all the way across the country and in this instance, throughout the state. The statistical analyst from the Department of Roads in the article that was handed out by Senator Hoagland to support his argument indicates that Omaha has a lesser rate of fatalities than the rest of the state and in either case the rate is not that high, 1.19 in Omaha as opposed to 1.30 in the rest of the state. So what I think is happening here is an attempt to freight this bill with a lot of excess baggage that is not needed. I gave a handout to each of you and you will find it in your boxes if you have not seen it already which points out that the State Department of Roads, not "may" have the authority, they "do" have the authority after traffic and engineering investigations to raise or lower the speed limit within or without the corporate limits of any city. So I think that the amendment being offered is not needed. However, I would like to ask Senator Labeledz a question before I sit down because I think my time is almost up.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Labeledz, did you say that you would agree to a rate of 60 miles an hour at this point within the corporate limits?