

SENATOR FENGER: Mr. President, members of the body, what are we discussing in this amendment? We are discussing roughly eight miles of I-80 in Omaha. Those of you out-state who are going to be eastbound to Chicago are going to have to slow down to 55 miles an hour when you cross the Missouri River. We are asking you to slow down to 55 miles an hour eight miles ahead. If you are westbound you have been 55 miles an hour all the way through Iowa. All we are asking for is eight miles through the City of Omaha. Rightly or wrongly, that stretch of I-80 in question is not just an interstate highway. It is private mass transportation and commuter traffic in Omaha. On the other hand, those of us who commute and turn the radio on, it is very rare in the morning when we don't have traffic advisories of three and four car pile ups, one lane traffic on that stretch at 55 and I submit to you that without this amendment those three and four car pile ups are going to become six to ten car pile ups and traffic will be a lot worse off with that ten mile increase in that area. Thank you.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Vickers and then Senator Schmit.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President and members, once again we are dealing with an Omaha issue. The State Legislature is attempting to legislate for a particular portion of the State of Nebraska, namely Omaha. I have driven that interstate system through Omaha. I have driven through there at rush hour and I'm a little bit surprised at my good colleagues from Omaha telling us how people up there now are driving 55 and saving lives and thus, let's don't raise the speed limit because they are going to be driving faster. Well as somebody that spends a lot of the time on the interstate highway system every weekend two hundred miles one way and two hundred back, at least four hundred miles every weekend, the times when I have driven through Omaha at rush hour I have had to speed up when I got to Omaha. If they are only driving 55 out there it is...my speedometer must be wrong on my car. I will agree, I think the people that commute in Omaha have a problem. I would suggest the problem is the people that are behind the wheels. I think we need to point out that we are not raising the minimum. If they want to drive 55, fine. They can drive 55. We are not saying that you have to drive 65 but from my perspective I think they are right now. I would also suggest that the interstate highway system was designed to be interstate, not designed to be a traffic for city traffic but the City of Omaha has used the interstate system for that. It seems to me that once again this body is in the process of developing class legislation and I wonder how long it is going to be before Lincoln wants an exception and Kearney and various other places in the state. I am considering that if it is such a safety feature that we are after maybe we should put an