

think I can assure you that there will be no funds of any substantial amount whatsoever coming to the State of Nebraska to provide for grade crossings from the federal government. This means that the million and half or two million dollars that we raise from the train mile tax annually will be the only funds available to provide for grade crossings. And I would guess that would probably build about one grade crossing per year. Given the number of cities that lie between Omaha and Scottsbluff I think you can recognize that many of those cities are going to be waiting a long, long time before they get a grade crossing. We are going to have our own Department of Roads establish a priority system as to how those crossings will be established and I would suggest that some of the small communities which may be most adversely affected will be the ones that will be the last to be served in regard to getting a new grade crossing. I just visited last week with some people from Columbus, Nebraska. I understand that the City of Columbus has volunteered to assist a major railroad by providing \$300,000 to move the switching yard out of the city limits of Columbus because it is a real problem in Columbus as it stands today. Now there are things that can be done to improve the entire situation but the train mile tax bill as it stands now will not do it. I believe that the ton mile tax is a fair tax. I believe that it more accurately represents the amount of revenue that should be returned to the state and I think that we ought to stick with it and give it a chance. I find it a little unfortunate that only last year we went through the lengthy debate and were able to establish the ton mile tax and today we are being pushed to the other direction and being told that the train mile tax is a better and more fair method of assessment for the railroads in the State of Nebraska. I know that there is a threat that the railroads will challenge the constitutionality of the ton mile tax but very frankly, I have visited with representatives of the cities who have told me that they are willing to take that chance and to face that test. I am not anti business and I think you all know that. It is not my intent to try to soak the railroads. I have always been probusiness on this floor and I continue to be so but I must stand here and ask for equity for many of our communities in the State of Nebraska that are going to be in very serious straits unless we find some method of providing funds to build these overpasses other than the present method which has been suggested. If we were to try to build these overpasses locally and in the town of Schuyler for example, where about twenty-five hundred people I think, reside there. It would have to be done in such a way that it would not have an adverse impact upon the homeowner. I really don't know how you can do that. As I said earlier, I was reluctant