

SENATOR FENGER: Senator Berrett, the Omaha school district is currently facing a three, three and a half million dollar annual cross town federal mandated budget in busing. In many of these instances private carriers are contracted. Is the private carrier aspect of cross town busing addressed in this and is it your opinion that Omaha school district and that mandate would follow under the same special fund?

SENATOR BARRETT: Question number one, it is my understanding that the committee amendments take care of contracting, leasing and so forth, Senator Fenger, and number two, I'm not in a position to answer that question. I'm sorry.

SENATOR FENGER: Thank you.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Koch.

SENATOR KOCH: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, this bill is a result of a rather extensive study on transportation in the State of Nebraska for the public school systems. The committee in its wisdom feels that this is the most appropriate way to meet transportation costs today. Contrary to what some of them may think this is not an urban versus rural type of proposal. We have in our office downstairs from the various administrators and others in the State of Nebraska what they are presently putting into transportation. It runs anywhere from 12% to 22% of their budget for the purpose of bringing children to an attendance center for the purpose of instruction. Now under the 7% lid I ask you, is this fair? When you start cutting programs so that you can provide transportation because by law this body has said, you will transport children who are elementary grades two miles and beyond, you are going to transport them. Four miles and beyond you're going to transport them also. As individuals I think it behooves you and I to look at the costs of transportation and see whether or not they shouldn't be set aside. I know several school districts that have attempted to do away with transportation. However, they have been unable to do so simply because parents become so accustomed to it they expect that convenience. Certainly I know that this may pierce the lid limit to some extent but the point is it's going to sit out here by itself where it can be examined by the public to determine to what extent they want to furnish transportation and to Senator Fenger I would say he'd better look at Bellevue because Bellevue is going to be one of the biggest losers there is when it comes to impact aid and Bellevue manages its own