

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President and members, I rise to oppose the kill motion, even though I understand the concerns voiced by Senator Clark and Senator Cope and Senator Haberman and others that we don't interject ourselves in the collective bargaining process. But I thoroughly agree with Senator DeCamp that this is not necessarily an issue of us interjecting ourselves in that collective bargaining process. It seems to me that we need to also recognize our responsibility to make sure that certain safety factors take place for the citizens of this state. Senator Cope mentioned that he thought the real purpose of the bill was the line that indicates that there is going to be an occupied caboose. Now if I would happen to smack into the side of a freight train going down that highway a short distance from our place, I would hope there would be somebody back there in the backend of that caboose so they would know that I had hit them, not that it would help me probably a whole lot if I hit the train but possibly there might be somebody survive. It seems to me also that I would rather somebody would be back there when you consider those trains are going through an awful lot of the rangelands of this state, I want to make certain there is somebody back there recognizing that if they are going along scattering fire for a good many miles, and I am sure people will say, well, that is something that the railroads are going to be concerned about anyway but I suggest to you that we, the legislative body of this state, should also be concerned and be responsible to make certain that certain things happen. Senator Haberman indicated that if they decided to do away with the cabooses that probably the employees would strike and that would solve their problem, the railroads then wouldn't do away with cabooses. I suggest to you that probably the railroad unions might make threats to strike but I am not certain that they would get a lot of support to strike over that one issue. But if that was the way that we think results should be achieved, it seems to me that there would be a detrimental impact to a lot more than just the railroads if strikes were the method used to achieve certain results. There is grain farmers out there with grain to be transported perhaps during harvesttime, with a strike in progress by various unions against the railroad, I would suggest that it wouldn't be the railroads suffering as much as it would be the farmers of this state. So I think that would be a very poor method to use to address a situation that we should have the integrity to recognize our responsibility and address it. I will admit that there were some things in the original bill, as Senator Cope pointed out that shouldn't have been there perhaps but how many of us have drafted bills and drafted them broader than we expected