

March 24, 1982

LB 761

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Mr. President, I rise for a point of clarification on one or two items Senator Beutler mentioned. I think he has got some good points there whether or not Driver's Education properly belongs in the schools. But I do have to say this having been in the insurance business for 20 years I know that the insurance companies keep very accurate records on drivers and what age groups has the most accidents. And for many years now insurance companies have given a special credit or discount to any teenager 16 years or older who has completed a certified Driver's Education course, and their parents insist, most of my insureds anyway that their children take these courses. Now one of my insurance children had twins going to Westside High and it was all filled up, the class, so they could not get in to take the Driver's Ed course. As a consequence, because their parents could afford it they did go to an independent or private enterprise Driver's Education class because, number one, they wanted their youngsters to learn the proper methods of driving, and, number two, they wanted that insurance discount that the insurance companies give from the time you get your license I think up until the age of...it's been so long since I've rated one of those, maybe 21 or so. So I don't think the insurance companies would be giving away money if they didn't think that this Driver's Education course was effective. A second point I would bring up, another of my insureds, a commercial account, has a large fleet of vans that they use to deliver their product, and they are very careful when they hire anyone to first get a motor vehicle report on them and if they are a particularly young driver, 18 or 19, they will ask them, did you complete a Driver's Education course? In a sense, Senator Beutler, that is vocational training so that these young men and women that are going to go out and get jobs where it is going to necessitate driving and I can think of more jobs than just delivery trucks, I mean if they are going to be salesmen, they are probably going to be driving. I halfway agree with Senator Beutler's amendment and I halfway don't. I don't honestly know which way to vote on it. I am not sure it belongs in education, but I would like to see something done not this year because there isn't time but next year where we could amend the law so that those parents who can afford to subsidize Driver's Education do so and those parents who cannot afford to pay the full cost of Driver's Education if they would be willing to sign a statement saying, our income is X number of dollars, etcetera, we are in effect unable to pay, and if there is a standard set for who can pay and who cannot, then they would get it at a reduced cost.