

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Madam President. Members of the body, Senator Elmer's amendment, I guess I can't disagree with in philosophy. And I told him I would not oppose this. I just want to make sure the body understands that the purpose of this piece of legislation is for younger driver safety. And the purpose was not to necessarily go in and open up all the statutes of driver education. As we do this there will probably be other amendments that are going to try to get us off the focus and the attention of what the legislation's purpose is and what we're doing here, and that is for driver safety and driver education. And I, at this point, would at least like to begin to discuss some of what Senator Moore had talked about, and that was our phones are going to start ringing off the hook. Well, Senator Moore, my phone has rung off the hook from a lot of people seeing me as one of the sponsors in doing this. And I discussed this with a lot of people. What I've got to tell you is when you come back and deal with safety, then I am out there on the road, you're out there on the road, and everybody is out there on the road, and it doesn't matter if you've got an inexperienced driver. I mean we mandate to people that you've got to learn to read, you've got to learn to write, you've got to do some science. We do all these things, and basically driver education has sort of seemed, well, but it's just one of those extra sort of things. Well, I don't know of one thing that I don't do every day and that's get in a motor vehicle and drive. And for the rest of their life they're going to do that. And from a policy point of view I have a tough time of understanding why we don't say of the most dangerous activity you're going to participate in every day as an adult, and that's driving a motor vehicle, that when you first get that license you don't have some base line in beginning safety consideration and safety instruction, instead of go out there and learn on your own. Because learn on your own isn't a very good policy when you're driving the types of vehicles, with the traffic we have today, and our society is a lot more mobile. You aren't just going to be driving around Minden, Nebraska, all of your life. You're going to be traveling to those metropolises like Grand Island and Kearney, maybe even Denver and Chicago. God help you if you go to L.A. But it's those types of policy considerations that we've got to do. And so in response to Senator Elmer's amendment here, I don't oppose it. I think that we start to lose focus of what the purpose of the bill is doing, this isn't designed to be the Christmas tree, to open up every problem that we've ever had with school permits, or to do that. His amendment does broaden the scope. And could I ask you just