

our committee last year. This is the bill that we were discussing on the last day before we went into individual senator priority bills last year and it does several things, but the major centerpiece to this is that it raises the age in which you can drive a motor vehicle in the State of Nebraska and everybody goes, oh, my goodness, it raises it to 17 years of age, but there is a caveat, there is a "but" to this. You can still drive at the age of 16 if you take a driver's safety course, commonly known as Drivers Education in the State of Nebraska. The reason for doing this? Relatively simple. We suffered through the early and mid-1980s budget crisis in the State of Nebraska and budgets were cut across the State of Nebraska. One of the things that got the axe was Drivers Education in this state. When that cut occurred, there was almost a direct relationship to the number of accidents and traffic problems with our youth. As Drivers Education sunk down and less schools provided it because of money, the state aid was cut, less and less people took Drivers Education, when they took less Drivers Education, all of a sudden, the accident rates go up. We...and all throughout the morning will be talking to you about those percentages. The response to that is, we can't reinstate state aid. We have enough monies, we have problems with funding the way it is, we don't want to mandate the local schools to pay for this because that would be a form of increasing the property tax. So what do we do? Well, the response is LB 336 which is an incentive program and it says that you will pay for these on your own, taking your own driver's education. What will the cost be? The costs have been estimated anywhere from \$75 to \$125, depending on how efficient, where it is at. Some schools provide this already. We've had a driver's education task force which studied the issue, used industry, insurance, schools, just groups who were interested in youth drivers. Now their approach really was LB 336. This has been a couple of years project and they came down and decided that LB 336 would be the good approach in terms of funding because funding really is the issue here. Senator Moore will, I think probably, stand up and has some amendments that will try to do different things with the funding, so during those speeches on those amendments look at the funding mechanism, but the bottom line, the real intent and purpose of LB 336 is that we need to somehow get our youth back into driver education, the safety of the young drivers. You're going to hear arguments about, my goodness, I've got kids, we can't afford to do this. Why, they've got to get to work. And why do they have to get to work? Well, they've got to get to work to earn the money so