

know, we shouldn't have to take that driver's safety course because we live out in the country and we learned to drive in all sorts of other conditions. These programs are graduated. These programs have initial tests so that you aren't put in a remedial group to do that. The other thing is is that not everybody drives out in the country anymore. As the state becomes more centered on its populations, you're going to have to drive from Franklin, Nebraska to Kearney or to Grand Island or to Lincoln or to Omaha or wherever. The world has become more complex particularly in using our state highway system and the state interstate system to do so. The program is not mandated. It does not say that a school must have driver's education and, in fact, if there is not a driver's education plan available, the safety center which is mandated in this state to carry out most all of our safety programs will have to provide this service at either a technical community college, come out to any school district, but they have to make the course available at least once each year if there is not a course available in the county. So the smaller counties that say, well, we don't have anything like this, the safety center is going to have to come out and do that for them. When do the courses occur? Well, it really can be up to the school if the school is already providing it. Some of them have it in their curriculum, some offer it in the summer, some offer it on the weekends and the safety center would probably do most of these things on a convenient basis and to come out there. But if there is a county that has one person who wants to take that, the safety center is going to have to come out and at least provide that course in the county once during the year. There is changes in regards to when they get their learner's permit. They can get their learner's permit without taking driver's safety but they have to take the driver's safety course within the first year and successfully complete and pass that. The percentages, there are a number of facts and figures that we could cite to you. Roughly, 19 percent of all the drivers in the State of Nebraska are younger drivers, yet they are involved in somewhere around 36 to 38 percent of all the fatalities. They are involved in many of the drunk driving accidents and fatalities in this state and it's all directly related to the cut in funding of driver education. We have to make tough choices in the state for funding. We made those choices in the early to mid-eighties. This is another approach not to reinstate funding, not to mandate it to the schools, but to, in fact, say, if you want to do this, if you want to be a driver in the State of Nebraska, you need to take safety first and there