

seat belt not in the front seat but only with the driver of that automobile. A lot of the arguments that we hear against having to have a safety belt law is that cars are now being equipped with air bags. And there are a lot of reasons why air bags are not sufficient alone to protect you in the front seat of the automobile. Number one, they only work in front end collisions. They don't work if you're hit a second time. They don't work if you're hit in the rear and the side, so there are a lot of reasons. But, looking at the air bag factor, the air bag, in most automobiles, if there is one, is on the driver's side. So we would then be putting at risk the passengers in the automobile. It does not make sense that we would only require the driver of the automobile to wear a seat belt and then get the ticket for it. The driver of an automobile is like the captain of a ship, he or she is responsible for what goes on in that automobile and is responsible for obeying the laws and is the one rightfully ticketed for any infractions. As Senator Chambers and I discussed, our laws, you know, deal with this issue on littering. If you...if someone in your car throws out a bag of garbage or litter, you can be stopped and fined. And the person who threw it out isn't fined, the person driving the automobile is fined. The same thing is true if your license plates aren't up to date. If I borrow Senator Wickersham's car and his plates are not up to date, I get the ticket. Senator Wickersham doesn't get the ticket. I'm driving the car, I'm responsible. Senator Chambers is so narrowly focusing this bill by only requiring the driver of the car and putting at risk the passengers in the front seat that it is really of no value at that point to have the law. And, indeed, as Senator Chambers likes to say that this is a bill concerned with money, if we do exempt the other passengers in the front seat, we will be out of federal compliance and we will not be able to put the money into the Highway Construction Fund that it should be but we will then begin diverting the money into the education program. And so it totally wipes out our compliance with federal regulations and the benefits associated with that. So I would encourage you not to allow Senator Chambers' amendment to come onto the bill because it really is detrimental to the bill and to what we're trying to accomplish because this is a safety issue and people going through windshields is a terrible, terrible thing. And the societal costs associated with it and the costs that occur when someone goes through the windshield of an automobile and is not wearing their safety belt is a terrible, terrible thing. And what Senator Chambers is doing is allowing that to occur and there are all kinds of reasons not to do it and I would