

SENATOR HORGAN: Yes.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Senator Horgan, why is it that no one ever insists upon school buses being equipped with seat belts? It seems to me that a bus with 40 children on it, more or less, ought to be the first requirement for seat belts. I transported a family of 10 in an automobile for years as they were growing up. That was before the seat belts were common but, nonetheless, a truckload of children ought not to be exempted. And can you tell me why there are no seat belts in any school buses?

SENATOR HORGAN: Senator, there's a number of reasons. Number one, the ride a child takes in a school bus is the safest ride a child ever takes. The percentage of deaths of children in school buses is practically unregistrable. Since 1986, there have been 401 minors die in the State of Nebraska since we haven't had a seat belt law. In the last 20 years or more there have been no children who have died in a school bus. School buses are not designed by the manufacturers to have seat belts in them. To require them to do so would be an undue burden and we would be the only state in the country to do so. The cost would be prohibitive. School buses are not designed to have seat belts in them. The seats in them are designed such that children are protected in accidents in other ways in the structure of the bus and there is no rational reason to do that, but I would comment that Senator Lamb's amendment has nothing to do with school buses. It has to do with rural or with farm pickup trucks.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Thank you for the enlightenment, my young friend. I do appreciate that. Let me just tell you something else. The day will come when there will be an accident involving children in school buses and there will be a rush and there will be pandemonium and there will be emergency legislation. I'm surprised we haven't seen federal legislation that demands seat belts in school buses. It is absolutely foolish that we all belt ourselves in, and I do, I've worn belts for many, many years and I like them and I wear them the vast majority of the time and I think Senator Lamb, even as old as he is, will learn to use his seat belt on those short trips because we're going to do that, Senator Lamb. It's going to become a force of habit. We'll do it automatically. But the point is you already exempted the mail carriers. You say we don't need them in the school buses, they're safe. My old pickup going