

March 4, 1996

Lb 952

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Well, just tell me who it is.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: It's the same in both cases, it's the innocent victim in both cases, as it is under current law.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: So this is another thing the innocent victim has to prove which does not have to be proved right now. Isn't that correct?

SENATOR MAURSTAD: That's correct.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Now do you think that this owner is going to just roll over and say, okay, this person was injured, I feel sorry for them, I'll go ahead and ante up and let them say I'm partly responsible and start paying, or have my insurance pay? Is that what you envision happening? Or will this be fought?

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Without...without the law written like it is now, where the law enforcement...the governmental entity is the insurer, it's quite, I think, easy for the determination of whether or not the vehicle owner was contributorily negligent or not.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. Members of the Legislature, those of you all who have heard discussions about litigation know that these are not just pat things, where you just bring somebody into court and they agree, yeah, I did it. It's not going to be that easy. Every step along the way in Senator Maurstad's bill you create an additional hurdle for the individual who is the innocent third party. Let me ask Senator Maurstad another question. Senator Maurstad, if the driver is found to be contributorily negligent, does that person have a right to appeal that finding?

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Are you moving away from the vehicle owner now, back to the driver?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: No, no, the vehicle owner.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Okay.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I want to stay with the owner.