

Journal.)

Madam President, LB 901, the bill originally introduced by Senator Chambers. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 3 of this year. At that time it was referred to the Transportation Committee for public hearing. The bill was advanced to General File. There are committee amendments pending by the Transportation Committee.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: The Chair recognizes Senator Kristensen to open on the committee amendments.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Madam President and members of the Legislature. One of the more anticipated matters of this session has become the speed limit issue. That is what LB 901 is this year. And for as much fun as you saw on the last bill, those two arch enemies, old Senator Chambers and young Senator Maurstad, who were dueling banjos, well, dueling swords on the last bill, have marshaled their forces together and are now comrades in arms of the speeding issue. Since 1974, the maximum speed limits in this state have been beyond our control. Those have been done by the federal government. We talk about mandating certain things in education. We talk about a variety of things that we do for public safety. But quite frankly, the most dangerous thing you do every day is drive. And thus comes the speed limit debate. In 1974, our speed limits were mandated at 55 mile an hour. We relaxed those in 1987 to 65 miles an hour. So for the past 20 years, particularly the rural states like Nebraska and many others, have found ways to give some relief to our citizens. And we've done a variety of ingenious ways of getting around the speed limit. We have gone to no points, minimal fines. We have allowed ways to get two points back off your drivers' licenses by going to safety driving classes. We've created diversion programs which would allow you to not get that ticket. And so in effect what we've done over the last 20 years is found a way to practically and legally speed while still having those speed limits there. A number of states have placed reverter language, which means that when the federal mandate was lifted, you'd revert back to their speeds that they had prior. That's the reason you see a number of states having quick changes to the speed limit. So now twenty-some years later, our national policy has changed, the issue back of the speed limits is where it belongs, and that's here at the state level. What we've done is present to you a