

plan that is comprehensive for the state in terms of speed limits. Senator Chambers' bill, the original 901, dealt with the...basically the interstate system. Senator Maurstad's bill dealt with the other roads in the state. And we have combined those for a committee amendment that takes something from both of those particular bills. If you're going to ask me as we begin this debate, we've asked for many years the flexibility to be relieved of mandates. This is one of those mandates that we've been relaxed from. And what you will see is a system of where we will find ways now to get to safety. We'll probably increase the speed limits. If the popular opinion is true, those speed limits will undoubtedly go up in some areas whether it's good policy or not. But for the next couple of sessions we're going to probably have speed limit bills that will either up it in some areas, lower it in others, but what really will occur is I think we're going to spend the next number of years looking at safety. You may see Senator Schimek's safety inspection bill come back. You may well see drivers' education come back. You're going to see, perhaps, seat belts become a primary enforcement tool. The opposite of when we ratchet down the speed limits and found ways around it, when we bring the speeds back up we're going to find ways to go back to the safety that we're going to lose by those higher speeds. This is a classic determination, as we begin this debate keep in mind the following things: You're going to balance safety versus convenience; if you wanted to be absolutely safe you'd all wear helmets when you were driving. You would travel 40 mile an hour, there'd be less death, there would be less accidents, the insurance rates would be lower, but quite frankly, the public convenience would not be served. And so you've got to balance those two types of things in there. The new state crisis may well be instead of a focus on drunk driving, you'll probably begin to see more of a focus on speed. And the old adage, the old line that speed kills will become the byword rather than don't let friends drive home drunk. Anyway, what the committee did, we heard the bills in late January. We spent about three weeks taking input. The committee went back and did a number of things. A tremendous amount of public input. I have a floor book that I'm going to hand out. Because of the lateness of the day, I'm going to hand that out the next time we do this. What I want to do briefly is go through the committee amendment with you; and it does the following things. Do not look at the green copy of 901. The committee amendment becomes the bill. It establishes the following maximum speed limits on the highway