

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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because they feel like they're having individual rights taken from them. They feel that if they choose not to buckle up and if they're, therefore, in an accident and they're injured or they're killed, that's a choice that they want to make. They feel that they can do that and that it really doesn't have any impact on any other members of society in the state of Nebraska. We find very clearly that that is not the case. We find the nonwearing of seat belts and the cost to society through medical costs and social welfare programs is extremely substantial, and the medical costs of unbelted victims are 55 percent more than those individuals who are belted, who are, and 16 percent of those funds are paid by the public, by your dollars. So it is not something that we can hide behind that this is our individual right, that it has no effect on anyone else, because it absolutely does impact all of us within the state of Nebraska. It...we've also seen, in an Iowa study, that unbelted crash victims average a hospital stay of 17 days, compared to 7 days for belted individuals, which is supportive of the costs that I have just outlined. We find that as we upgrade from secondary to primary, the use of safety restraints, of seat belts, that usage goes up by approximately 12 to 15 percent. I don't think it takes any of us very long to look at that statistic and understand what that does relative to reducing injury and to saving lives. Now, I have not and I've tried not to make it the driving force behind this legislation, but it's very obvious that if we do enact...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BYARS: ...a standard seat belt law within this state that additional highway safety funds are going to be available for our use. I'll close at this point. I hope that that brings you up to date on where we have left this, this bill, and I'm obviously always available to answer questions. Certainly want to reiterate for you any of the information that we might have forgotten over that period of time, and I ask for your support of LB 356.

CLERK: Mr. President, the...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Mr. Clerk.