

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

April 12, 1999

LB 356

a bill because of time. It's a matter of bracketing bill to what purpose are we ultimately going to achieve here? And if there are 27 people who are willing to make that last change, logically, there ought to be 27 people to bracket the bill again as there was the first time around to bracket it to the first part of next year. By doing that, the bill would then come off the agenda for the remainder of this session and then its fate would be left for what do we do next year, and if it would be reprioritized at that point in time. Obviously, not personally towards Senator Byars. I think he understands that this bill has tremendous problems. It has a good purpose and that's safety, but it's a matter of how do you go about doing that and what mechanism. I must tell you that from personal experience the years that we tried to get driver's education, that truly is the way to make people wear their seat belts. A law that says, thou shalt do that, the best thing we could do is, if you want to prevent death, you ought to wear a helmet. You ought to wear a helmet when you're driving a car. We know that practically isn't going to work, and I'm not suggesting we do that. But the issue is education and if you're not smart enough to buckle up your seat belt. And, yes, there are a variety of social costs that come with that. We passed a bill, the provisional operator's permit, last year. We've tried to get mandatory operator's education in the past and the body was unwilling to do that because of cost; that it was more important to spend money on a...shoes for basketball or a dress or to pay for a car to go to work, and the reason that you paid for a car to go to work is so you could afford the insurance and the car, it was sort of a circular argument, but that education truly was the best mechanism that we had to do that. Given what I've seen of this bill at this point, I think it also is the best mechanism to bracket it. In terms of what does it do to average people, the opportunity here is a balancing act. Yes, there's safety. If we thought that the passage of this bill would have an automatic impact of everybody buckling up because that's what the law required, I would have you look at speed limits. I'd have you look at a variety of other laws that we pass, and nobody anticipates ever getting caught. There is a faction out there who would view this as it's...and I know Senator Chambers has his issue, but I must tell you that this is...this opens up the door to a lot of people. Every car does have a seat belt. The ability to stop someone just to check or that I saw, I