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FLOOR DEBATE

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No county came in on this. So how could it be a significant matter of what the counties want to do? Second point is, the counties can still do it. If they're not satisfied with the Department of Roads' action, they can still do it. They can still regulate. Why would you want to take away from the county the option of perhaps the Department of Roads taking care of the matter? And I thought that the point illustrated by Senator Vrtiska's situation really emphasized that point. That is, Table Rock, or that community was unhappy with the department...what the department was doing. But at least they had the option of trying to get the department to act more quickly and to do what they were supposed to do. If you pass this bill, that option won't be there. The county will have to take it upon themselves and spend the money and do the organizing and spend the time to get done that which they want to get done. All you're doing with this bill is taking away from the county an option. And I would emphasize again that the interests of the county and I think the interests of the state is working well together in this area. Because it's in the interest of the counties along scenic byways, for example, to encourage people from the cities and to encourage tourism from other states to come into the counties and spend money. And believe me, the image of Nebraska, what you see from the highways when you drive around, makes a big, big impression on people. More than it should, it defines the state and the quality of the people. Are we a people that care about how things look? Are we a people that care about beauty? All of that relates to the economic area of tourism. And so I think the interests of the county in wanting to attract those kinds of dollars...some counties have beautiful parks in them. Senator Vrtiska's district has a beautiful park. And I believe, if I'm not wrong, Senator, that that road leading to the park is a scenic byway. And I don't think anybody would want that particular road and that particular attraction diminished. So I simply offer you this motion because I think this is a bill without a good purpose, addressing something that is not a problem. And I think that this state has had remarkable success in the last few decades in cleaning up our roads, in making them lovely means of getting to different areas of the state, and that we ought not to slough off something that works.