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LB 303

AM1215, Mr. President. (Legislative Journal page 1197.)

SPEAKER BROMM: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, the manner in which this bill is constructed, and I'm dealing with pages 16 and 17, the new material there, for those of you who would like to follow, it basically requires, on page 16, that if you want to be exempt from wearing a helmet there are certain things that you need to do. You need to be at least 21 years of age, you need to be equipped with eye protection, you need to carry proof of health insurance, and then (d) is the one that I want to discuss with you. It says, "carries proof of successful completion of," and basically the motorcycle safety course. But that whole section says that there is another exception to the whole section. That is, you don't have to meet all these requirements if, on page 17, lines 17 through 12, you can be exempt if you meet these alternative requirements, and the alternative requirements indicate that you have to be a person born prior to January 1, 1984, and secondly, you have to be equipped with eye protection, just as with the other one. Thirdly, you have to carry proof of health insurance, just as with the other exemption, but what you don't have to do, you don't have to go through the highway safety...the motorcycle safety course, and there are two things wrong with this paragraph. My amendment would strike this alternative because there are two things wrong with it. First of all, it says that everybody who's 20 or 21, depending on how you interpret it, and older doesn't have to take the safety course. Senator Baker emphasized how important this safety course is, and I assume it's important for everybody, those who are licensed to ride a motorcycle now and those who are not. And so it seems to me the preferable policy is to require everybody to take the safety course in order to be exempt from wearing the helmet. This is not a typical grandfathering situation where you're going to lose your whole license to practice law or something if you don't pass an exam. This should be a fairly easy safety course for people to pass, especially if they've had some experience on a motorcycle, and they ought to be asked to take that course and to pass it, just as you would pass a driver's driver license test, in order to be exempt from the helmet. So that's the one