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SENATOR VRTISKA: One minute.

SENATOR JENSEN: ...Robert Harry, Good Samaritan Hospital, Kearney; Lori...or Lloyd Westerbuhr, MD, Regional West Medical Center, Scottsbluff, Region 4; James McHugh, Health Care Administrator, Region West Medical Center, Scottsbluff; Alfredo Ramirez, Norfolk; Jan Stordahl, Star Care, BryanLGH; Pat Thundercloud, PA, Indian Health Services, Winnebago. I believe the experts when it comes to this issue. Those are the hospitals, the Trauma Board, the Nebraska Medical Association, and all of the other medical providers in the state who say maintain the helmet law that we have. It has saved lives. It has saved injuries. It has saved dollars.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Time. Thank you, Senator Jensen. Senator Thompson.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I rise to support Senator Byars' amendment. I think it's very important to the enforcement of this law should it pass, and I also rise in opposition to the underlying law. This is an article in today's Des Moines Register. If you look at the map, Iowa, our neighbor, is one of the states that has no motorcycle helmet law. It's one of only three states, actually, that has no law. And the headline said; Motorcycle Fatalities Climb As Riders Buck Helmet Law. Motorcycle related deaths are on the rise in Iowa and across the country at the same time states move away from tougher helmet laws. It's a lengthy article and I'm just going to highlight what's going on in Iowa, a place without a helmet law. Of the 285 fatal motorcycle crashes in Iowa between 1993 and 2002, only 28 victims wore helmets, according to the Department of Transportation. In 10 other cases, it was not determined if helmets were worn. A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration report last year concluded that riders without helmets are three times more likely to suffer a fatal head injury. And we're just talking about the people who die. And this is Iowa, 285 fatal motorcycle crashes in this period; only 28 victims wore helmets; and only 10 others that weren't identified. You could say maybe there were 38. I don't think we, as a state, want to put our citizens in unsafe situations,