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LB 925

SENATOR KRUSE: Mr. President and members, thank you. I rise in support of all that is before us. Often we need to follow the lead of an agency, and particularly DMV, to make corrections that they can see that we don't, so I support that. I support the committee amendment and would point out to you that offenders who can drive during this time have to have a driver's license to do it. Some people assume otherwise, but they have to, even to use these other conveniences. I would speak to the hit-and-run part of the base bill at the same time. Most persons here are aware that our family has been hit by an impaired driver, but most are not aware that we were hit twice. Two times we've been hit by a drunk driver. Each time it was with a multiple offender, and (laugh) this is kind of a big day for us. If this and another bill passes, neither one of these crashes would have occurred, I'm convinced of that, because there was no sanctions against these persons. The person who hit and run our son did...saw no fine, no jail time, no sanction of any kind, because the judge said, if I fine you, your mother would have to pay it, and so he went out to offend four more times, that he was arrested. What has happened here is that we've got a public that is aware of it. I think of one family today who's well aware of this, whose son was hit by an impaired driver, and that driver kept moving. That son possibly could have been helped by that driver, but the driver saw it as his benefit to keep moving, and the son died. Now why did that driver keep moving? Because it was in his best interests, under present law. And he has to be a little bit of an actor (laugh), but he can say to the police, who fairly quickly caught up with him, I was all shook up; I hit somebody and I didn't know what kind of damage I'd done, and so I had to go to a bar to settle my nerves. Yeah, he went to a bar to settle his nerves, which very cleverly locked him out of any testing by the police, and therefore, he couldn't be fined for driving impaired. As Senator Friend has already indicated, that becomes a lesser offense to hit and run, even causing that kind of damage, than to go forward with a multiple offense, which was what his record would have been. We need to correct this. I don't doubt that everybody on the floor understands and agrees to that, so I'm not going to press it, but I do want us to recognize that this affects real people, affects some of us, and it affects persons