

March 29, 1971

PRESIDENT: Move to LB725. Clerk will read.

CLERK: Read title. LB 725

PRESIDENT: Senator Maresh.

SENATOR MARESH: Mr. President, Members of the Legislature, the purpose of this bill came about due to the Supreme Court determination that motorized farm equipment are called motor vehicles and the Attorney General has given an opinion that youngsters below 16 are required to have drivers licenses to operate this equipment on highways. This involves about 20,000 youngsters in Nebraska and due to the labor shortage a good many farmers are in a bind. They will not be able to move their equipment from field to field. At the committee hearing, many people appeared in favor of this bill, the Farm Bureau, the Farmers Union, NFO, and many individual farmers. The opposition was very small. I have checked with the motor vehicle department and the highway patrol and the extension tractor training program director and they all told me that they don't oppose a 12 year old being in this bill. The committee has amended this bill to read 14 years, instead of 12. I am proposing an amendment to include the 12 year old to 16. In studying the reports on tractor fatalities in 1970, out of 17 tractor deaths in Nebraska, 14 were people over 16. There were three below 16 and two of these three occurred on the family farm. I don't believe the problem is very great as far as youngsters having accidents on Nebraska highways. Some people have indicated to me that regardless to them whether the bill passes or not, they will allow their youngsters to drive. They would rather pay the fine, than to hire unreliable help. (Inaudible) is about to start and I think we should act on this bill and get it enacted as such that we can. The amendment that I proposed to this bill on line 1, strikes 14, inserts 12 and in lines 8 and 10 strike possesses a hazardous occupation training certificate issued pursuant to regulations formulated by the U.S. Department of Labor. This part about the training diploma has to do with the extension services and most of the youngsters in Nebraska haven't had the opportunity to take this training program. Most of the youngsters would not be allowed to get a drivers license at the present time. I would like to propose this amendment. I make a motion that this amendment be adopted.

PRESIDENT: Senator Maresh, first we should adopt the committee amendments. (End of belt #8) Well then, Senator Holmquist.

SENATOR HOLMQUIST: Mr. President, Members of the Legislature, the Committee on Public Works heard this bill, we heard testimony for it and against it. There were many farmers there who testified that they had 10 year old children that were able and responsible enough to drive a tractor. I think most of them had their children driving on the farm. This does propose a problem if you limit the 14 and 15 year olds because those people then would be the only ones who would be eligible to drive a tractor