

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

February 24, 1999 LB 356
LR 32

bill for this session.

And, Mr. President, a new resolution, LR 32, offered by Senator Kristensen, talking about the award honorees for service to the state of Nebraska with respect to Statehood Day ceremonies. That will be laid over, Mr. President. That's all that I have at this time. (See pages 702-704 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN PRESIDING

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Byars, I'm going to recognize you, since we had started debate on this bill earlier on another day, I'm going to ask you to give us an update of where the bill is at, so the body can be refreshed as to the position of the bill and the content.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Appreciate that opportunity, thank you, colleagues, for your patience in this matter...in this matter on LB 356. As we discussed briefly in the opening on the bill, I tried to make the...explain to you, basically, what LB 356 is, and talked to you about the points within that bill that would change our Nebraska statutes from enforcement of seat belt violations from a secondary offense to a primary offense, which means in simple language that you can be stopped by law enforcement authorities for not wearing your seat belt. The way the statute currently reads, the way the law is enforced at this point is you cannot write a citation for a seat belt violation unless you've been stopped for another infraction. That can be many things, obviously. If you have a taillight out, if you've been speeding, if you blow a stop sign and the law enforcement official notes that you do not have your seat belt on at that point, he can ticket you accordingly for that secondary offense. Statistically, I think there's tremendously strong evidence that supports the fact that as you move from a secondary to a primary offense for not wearing your seat belt, that this increases seat belt usage substantially, and as we increase seat belt usage substantially, we decrease the number of deaths and serious injuries attributable to accidents where seat belts are not in use. And this is where I'm coming from. Some of the opponents, some of the telephone calls that I've been getting in my office, and they are very few, but those that are in opposition to this bill seem to be