

LB 213

Grand Island Independent entitled "The Tragic Story of a Bad Driving Record and What It Brought". I think it will change your mind.

SPEAKER: Senator Snyder.

SENATOR SNYDER: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body, I, too, am definitely opposed to the effort offered by Senator Keyes to indefinitely postpone LB 213. When you look around today and I won't cite a bunch of specifics, but I think that what I am going to say is certainly the viewpoint of not just a simple majority but a large majority of Nebraska citizens today and that is, the idea of coddling offenders is going to change their outlook. I would like to share with the body just for a moment another reference from a newspaper in Nebraska. You can say what you want about editorials in newspapers and certainly I do not agree with 100% of what is written on the editorial page but I will admit that a great deal of my philosophy on issues comes from the insight provided by editorial writers around the state, for that matter around the country and this one is no exception. It is taken from the Omaha World Herald a week ago today and it deals with this bill which would have the courts being required to notify the State Department of Motor Vehicles when a person is placed on probation. The editorial, and I don't want to read it all and I hope that you have had the opportunity to read it. The World Herald editorial says the Lincoln officials told the Committee they were afraid the Legislature might take action which would impede Lincoln's program of trying to rehabilitate drunken drivers. The Committee was told the answer is not to stand in the way of probation programs which seemed to be working but to have all Nebraska courts adopt the program similar to Lincoln's. Well, the gist is this. The request does not strike us as being wholly realistic even if all the courts in the state decided to follow Lincoln's example, it could be years before similar programs could be put into effect across Nebraska. The time to iron deficiencies and close the loopholes in probation procedures is now and the editorial concludes with this, "We can see nothing wrong with requiring a case resulting in probation be regarded as a first offense conviction and reported as such to the state, but we think it should be passed." This reminder came from a friend of mine who is the Westside Community School district, Ed Stribley, and he points out that about 60% of the people killed in automobile traffic or traffic accidents have been found to be under the influence of alcoholic beverages and about half of the 2,000,000 people injured every year were in the same condition. Hence, many serious steps need to be taken to control this problem and I would liken what we are speaking of here to the drug programs. I've often wondered how many of these so-called rehabilitation programs we're going to have to have which provide many dollars and a great deal of dialogue and news stories but they don't get to the core of the problem. I maintain that if you take all the money spent on the drug programs today, so-called drug combatant programs, go out and get the pusher, you will have your drug program...your drug problem ended once and for all and I say the same thing holds true. If the education processes have not done the job for our drivers, we're going to have to get stiff. We're going to have to say that we don't care if your job depends upon it, that this is a serious problem and we're not...why should we spend more attention or pay more attention and apparently we are, if we kill this bill, why pay more attention to worrying about the 60% who are drunken drivers that are mutilating bodies, killing off families. Why give them more consideration than the injured parties. Get them off the highways. Again, I liken this to that drug problem. Go to the core of it. Don't start from the outside and work your way in. Go to the middle and take off the drunken driver from your highways and see if our fatality and injury statistics don't drop drastically. I don't think that there is anything too harsh with taking a person's drivers license if they have it revoked this many times. Mr. President, I would again urge the body certainly