

April 5, 1973

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Cal Carstens.

SENATOR CARSTENS: Mr. President, and members of the legislature, I would like to ask Senator Barnett a question if he would yield? And then, I would like to make a statement or two relative to the subject if I may?

PRESIDENT: Will you yield?

SENATOR BARNETT: I'll try Senator Carstens.

SENATOR CARSTENS: Senator Barnett, as you recall in our hearing on this bill, there were questions asked that after, in the event that this bill passes, then the, and the statistics are compiled, to what use are those statistics going to be made and while we are sympathetic to the problem Senator Barnett, all of us are, we are wondering what this specific use of these specifics are going to be, what programs are going to be or what are the anticipated programs, what are the solutions to these, this problem that are going to try to be implemented from the use of the statistics that we have now, and those to be accumulated in the future, to the best of my knowledge, to this point we have not had this answered and I think that as far as the committee is concerned, this is one of the fine questions that we had and until we have some assurances of what is going to be done, down the road, we are a little reluctant to compile more and more.

SENATOR BARNETT: I think it's a fair question, and I don't think at the present time that we have this statistics, at the present time when you take the alcohol related deaths in the state of Nebraska, it is done on a hit and miss proposition. We don't know if there is any drugs involved in the accidents, we only assume that it's done. You and I both know that everybody in here is an expert in highway safety and they all have their own philosophy as to what should be done to reduce traffic fatalities. This is just another way to point out in my opinion and in the opinion of several other people, that may be all the weight and all the points of progress should not be made just towards the alcoholic driver or the drunk driver, that maybe we should start considering the speed, maybe we should start considering the highway construction, maybe we should start considering the drug area if it's taken over in fatality areas, and this doesn't mean narcotics in the sense we think of it as a criminal act, it could be sleeping drugs, it could be a lot of things, to keep people awake on the highway. There is no magic answer that I can give you as to what it's going to accomplish. I think it's just part of the puzzle to try and piece it together to reduce the traffic fatalities through finding out if alcohol is the major, the major contributor to traffic fatality, or if there is other fields that we as Senators should be paying attention to at this time. I can't give you any magic answer, as to what, that I'm going to cure fatalities with this, I think it's just a part that we need and a piece of the legislation to help us decipher in the long run what is some of the major factors.

SENATOR CARSTENS: Mr. President, may I continue with one more question from Senator Barnett?

PRESIDENT: Go ahead Senator Carstens.

SENATOR CARSTENS: We do have available some figures on a national basis, do we not, that are relatively acceptable as far as alcohol related --

SENATOR BARNETT: I don't know whether they are acceptable to Nebraska or not cause what they do in New York and Pennsylvania makes no difference to me.