

Nelson, Schmit, Beyer, Goll, Hall, Higgins, Remmers, Chronister and Hoagland. (Title read.) The bill was first read on January 21 of this year. It was referred to the Public Works Committee for hearing. The bill was advanced to General File. There are committee amendments pending, Mr. President.

**SPEAKER NICHOL:** Senator DeCamp, are you going to take the committee amendments?

**SENATOR DECAMP:** Yes, Mr. President. Here is what the committee amendments do. They gut the bill and wipe it out and destroy it and what they leave in the bill is the last paragraph that says that in a personal injury accident or automobile accident the court can consider whether somebody did or did not have a seat belt on as mitigation of damages only, not to compare to fault thing, but mitigation of damages. That is what the committee amendments do. Now I put those committee amendments or I offered those committee amendments and the committee adopted those amendments and that is, quite frankly, how the bill got out of committee. It was my belief the bill was going to get to the floor in one way or another and, therefore, the committee reached this compromise when the issue got stalemated. Since it has become a national issue, a major national issue, I felt it should be debated here and it was on that basis then we voted it to the floor. I guess I personally have deep reservations about the whole seat belt issue because it involves government, so to speak, stepping into our lives and I'm sure you'll hear more arguments about that. I'm more concerned about the reason or methods the government is doing it and that is they are not using a federal law. They're not using something done by the Congress. They are using something done by the Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole in kind of a blackmail fashion. You do this or I am going to do that, the old seat bag or seat...whatever you call those baggie things, controversial air bag, yeah. And for that reason I think it's an inappropriate way or method to force the legislation. At the same time, just so you know real clear, the committee amendments as they are now literally wipe out the bill and would essentially do nothing, kill the bill. Therefore, I believe the debate can center to save a lot of time on the amendment that Senator Morehead is going to offer to the committee amendments which of course is reinstatement of her bill in some form or other. So with no further adieu I