

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of committee amendments.

PRESIDENT: Committee amendments are adopted. What remains on the bill? Senator Chizek, you may explain the bill.

SENATOR CHIZEK: Mr. President, members, LB 493 addresses a problem that we have in our state with our young people who are exposed to situations that perhaps they don't fully understand the consequences. Unfortunately there is a portion of our adult population that contribute to this problem. Some startling facts come to light when you examine the problems with young people and alcohol. Although teenagers comprise only 8 percent of the driver population, and...

PRESIDENT: (Bell.) I have to find some way to stay awake. Excuse me, Senator Chizek, go ahead.

SENATOR CHIZEK: ...and account for only 6 percent of the vehicle miles traveled, they add up to 17 percent of all accidents, 15 percent of all drunk driver accidents. Insurance companies have estimated that teenage drunk driving accidents are costing society close to \$6 million per year. In the past five years teenage admissions to treatment centers have increased four-fold, although much of this may be attributed to a greater alcohol awareness. It indicates that alcohol awareness is a problem with our youth and teenage drunk driving is not the only result of combining alcohol and young people. There have been increases in vandalism to public and private property, much of which has been contributed to alcohol abuse. LB 493 will not solve the problem entirely, but it does make a step in the right direction by stiffening the penalties, and we can send a stronger message to our citizens that we will not tolerate adults contributing to the alcohol abuse problem of our youth. I would urge you to advance the bill.

PRESIDENT: Is there further discussion? Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Mr. Chairman, would Senator Chizek yield to a question?

SENATOR CHIZEK: Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Senator Chizek, did the committee amendments, I've just been reading about them, did they make