

SENATOR PAPPAS: (Response inaudible.)

PRESIDENT: Senator Goll passes. Senator Labeledz, do you wish to speak on this amendment, the Vickers amendment?

SENATOR LABEDZ: Just a couple of sentences, Mr. President. I can't see how anyone on the floor of this Legislature would vote against safety seat belts on a bus for children. That, to me, is the most important thing that has been brought up outside of Senator Hall's. Senator Hall's was maybe first, but I would say that this is probably the most important. I can just see it. I noticed up in the balconies today, both sides were filled with little children. Some of them probably not more than seven or eight years old. Then I look outside of the office window and I see lines of buses that brought those children. They sometimes come hundreds of miles just to see the Legislature in action. I think those children should be protected. I think they, too, should be buckled up. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Morehead, then Senator Hefner.

SENATOR MOREHEAD: Mr. President and members of the body, I totally concur with Senator Labeledz, and Senator Vickers, and all of those that are concerned for the safety of children and school bus safety belt legislation. We did discuss this. In fact, Senator Schmit and I, between ourselves, agreed that we were going to address this issue next year, independently of the bill which we have before us. The reason that we said independently was for two items. First of all to immediately require, within 90 days, that all the school buses, over 10 passengers, have safety belts installed in them would not be manufacture installed safety belts. School buses are stressed differently than other passenger vehicles. They do not...they cannot have shoulder straps with them. There is a study that is coming from Canada, and we are waiting for that study, in fact, which shows, and I think I addressed this on General File debate, that if a child is buckled in with a lap belt, with no shoulder restraint, and there is an accident, it tends to throw the child into the seat ahead of them with the seat projecting up. Now there are problems inherent in the design of the school bus and the way that those belts can be stressed and designed. That is absolutely the only reason that we eliminated school buses from this because we, too, feel that children should have that additional safety