

PRESIDENT: Senator Schmit. Speaking order then is Senator Hefner, Nelson, Haberman, Smith, and Vickers.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well, Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I rise to oppose the motion by Senator Hoagland to bring LB 524 to the floor. The bill was heard in committee and last year I believe it did receive four votes to advance to the floor. I told Senator Hoagland I would hold another session last week to see if there was a change in the philosophy or feeling of the members of the committee. At that time, I believe there were only three who voted to bring it to the floor and there were several abstentions and several nos. I would like to say that as far as I am concerned, the issue has been controversial since my first day in the Legislature more than 17 years ago. We have all heard and we are going to continue to hear the pros and cons of helmet usage. As I told Senator Hoagland, I did not make a concerted effort to kill the bill in committee. I feel very strongly that the issue is a very controversial one, and if 25 members want to bring it to the floor, that I was not inclined to throw an additional hurdle before Senator Hoagland by killing the bill and requiring 30 votes. I think that this body has enough good judgment to decide that without using the usual and I guess customary techniques of a chairman, if you want to use that, to stop a bill, that I respect Senator Hoagland and his legitimate concerns for the safety of people to that extent, and I would not try to do that. But I do suggest that engineers that we have listened to over the years are divided about the value of the helmets. There have been people who have told us that a helmet raises the temperature of an individual's head three times as much as does a wool cap, and they also indicate that it will reduce the side vision that is available to the rider of a motorcycle. I have worn helmets for many years in my business as an aerial applicator and I have to say that from time to time I resent the thing. Most of the time I wear it. Several times I wore it I was glad I had it on. I don't know whether it ever saved my life or not, but when you are upside down in an aircraft, it is kind of comforting I admit that. But I would just suggest that perhaps one of the reasons...several of the reasons why I did not vote to bring the bill to the floor, number one, we have seen enough issues on this floor thus far this session that have taken a lot of time and have gone nowhere and will probably go nowhere and continue to