

are two, three or four issues in which the members receive incredible amounts of contact and information from two or three sides that are involved in an issue. In this case it pits two classic power groups, the railroads or the owners of the railroads, management of the railroads against "labor", those individuals that actually perform the labor on the railroads. A few years ago Nebraska became the first state in the United States to mandate, that is order, under state law that the trains going through the state actually have to have a manned caboose. And the theory of doing this, the reason for it was that it was necessary for safety purposes, safety reasons. The issue now becomes today, has it been demonstrated that, indeed, cabooses are necessary for safety or has technology over the years, both in the past and in the three or four years since this law was implemented, has technology made it possible to have even more efficient safety protection rather than have "a manned caboose"? In other words, the bottom line I think, reduced to its simplest question is this, is a mandated manned caboose simply a form of what we used to call featherbedding? Is it necessary or is it indeed necessary for safety? Now as I say, I believe every member of this body has been repeatedly contacted and presented arguments, information by the volumes by both sides, as to the merits of their side and there are those that would say, the sponsors of this bill and the supporters, that indeed safety can be better accomplished and is being accomplished without those manned cabooses and the manned cabooses are an unnecessary and very expensive additional thing that technology has rendered obsolete. It is unfortunate in life, but it is a fact of life, that many things that we thought were necessary as recently as five or ten or twenty years ago are today obsolete. I think that's the case of the caboose. Nostalgia says keep it. Economics say otherwise and so, as I say, I doubt that anything we say here today, and I literally mean that, anything is going to change one vote either way. I think you've pretty well made up your minds and the only question, the only real question is whether 25 individuals have made up their mind that the caboose is not necessary and that technology and other methods can better accomplish that purpose. And so I would hope we would get to a vote reasonably quick. I doubt, as I say, anything could be said that would change opinions. I have ten minutes for opening. I think I have used less than five. I'd like to turn the balance of my time over to a co-sponsor on the bill, Senator Gary Hannibal, and then I