

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Hannibal, please.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Mr. Speaker and members, I, of course, rise to oppose the kill motion. There are so many things to say and such a small amount of time. I've listened to some of the arguments so far dealing with the fire department, dealing with hazardous material, dealing with it being premature and what kind of...what states have what. I don't even know which ones to start on yet. I suppose the best way is, and I could argue on the fires in the state very easily. We've had a tremendous decline in fires over the last 8 years. I think the institutes of...incidence of reported fires, in the last 8 years, is down about 60 percent, 60 percent down in the last 8 years of reportable fires. Of those fires, of that 60 percent there is only about 12 percent of the fires that may be caused by railroads and maybe not, but only 12 percent of them are reported by trainmen, whether they be in the caboose, or whether they be in the engine we don't know because it is not recorded as to whether they do that or not. But I would submit to you that there is a large number of those that would be reported by people in the engine because some fires can be caused by the engine. Some fires can be caused by any other car on that track, sparks, they aren't fires. Some of them could be caused by those. It is just as likely that the next train coming through sees the fire because it is highly unlikely that a spark that starts a small fire, towards the end of the train, is going to be picked up by the caboose going by. I want to talk about hazardous materials a little bit. There are all kinds of statistics to talk about the hazardous material situation. By the way, we are governed on hazardous materials by two different federal agencies. We are covered by two different federal acts. I don't see it necessarily as being a caboose bill issue or not. But I think one statistic that is interesting to me at least is that somewhere around 45 percent, 45 percent of all of the hazardous materials that are transported around this country are done by rail. Yet only 9 percent of the incidents that involve hazardous materials are accorded to rail traffic. Senator Scofield said it was premature, possibly. Maybe some day we can get rid of these cabooses, but it is premature right now. And she said that she is questioning some of the studies down in Florida. I'd submit, as Senator Johnson so eloquently put it, this was not a study in Florida, this was a study by all the states