

VI. TRANSPORTATION

A. DRIVER'S LICENSE

DRIVER'S LICENSE (2009). We oppose raising the legal driving age. We believe current school permit laws should be maintained and students should complete highway safety courses in order to receive the permit. Parents should be responsible for students' costs incurred for driver's education.

LICENSE REVOCATION (2007). We favor enactment of stiffer penalties for driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance. We favor mandatory minimum penalties for DWI with no plea-bargaining. Fines should be severe enough to deter any would-be offender. We also favor automatic revocation of driver's licenses for one year with no exceptions for first offenses. We favor a mandatory jail sentence on second offenses and the withholding of a percentage of a convicted second offender's wages for subsistence. We also favor equal prosecution.

We favor mandatory six-month revocation of the driver's license of any adult who knowingly sells or procures liquor for a minor.

B. FARM EQUIPMENT REGULATIONS

PERMITS (2011). State laws should reflect the needs of modern agriculture when establishing height, width, and weight requirements for both farm equipment and vehicles used in the transport of agriculture commodities. Weight limits for agriculture equipment should include consideration for the pressure, size, and type of tire on the implement in addition to the number of axles. We believe haulers of all agricultural commodities, including livestock, should be eligible to receive overweight permits. We support a graduated fine schedule for overweight violations. We believe haulers of agricultural products should be eligible to receive over-height and over-length permits to be uniform with neighboring states.

TRUCK LICENSES (2009). We support modifying regulations concerning farm-licensed trucks to facilitate the transportation of farm produce and supplies across state lines.

We support the elimination of mandatory filing of IRS Form 2290, enforced by the County Treasurer, for farm vehicles traveling less than 7,500 miles per year.

C. HIGHWAY SAFETY

AUTO INSURANCE (2009). We believe vehicle insurance companies should be required to notify the State Motor Vehicle Department when coverage is dropped on a vehicle. We support increasing penalties for uninsured motorists to prevent cancellation of policies after a vehicle is registered. We believe insurance companies should not be allowed to penalize a driver for a "not at fault accident".

HIGHWAY DESIGN (2010). The State of Nebraska must seek public input regarding the design and location of changes to the state highway system. The economic impact to production agriculture and related businesses must be considered prior to determining the initial design.

RIGHT-OF-WAYS (2010). We support more efficient maintenance of state and county road right-of-ways by the Dept. of Roads. We favor the establishment of a voluntary program allowing farmers and ranchers to hay right-of-ways. Landowners adjoining right-of-ways should have first priority. We support modifying current liability insurance requirements for haying right-of-ways to encourage more land owner participation. We oppose efforts to hold landowner's responsible for right-of-way maintenance. Right-of-ways should not be used for wildlife habitat.

Nebraska Farm Bureau should urge the state and counties to place a moratorium on all new plantings of shrubs and trees in the right-of-way that reduces highway safety and remove any volunteer or planted vegetation that reduces safety on public roads.

Trees that obstruct the view of the motorist should be removed. We resolve that tree overhang be higher than 16 feet above the road and six feet from shoulder to allow for truck clearance.

D. RAILROADS

ABANDONED RAILROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAY (2010). We believe that upon abandonment of a railroad right-of-way, the land should be reverted back to the adjoining landowner by state and federal law. We are opposed to the Game and Parks Commission acquiring abandoned railroad rights-of-way.

CROSSINGS (2008). We urge railroad companies to improve their efforts at maintaining safe railroad crossings throughout the state. We believe the responsibility for maintaining railroad crossings should revert from the Department of Roads to the Public Service Commission.

We support legislation to require reflective material on the sides of all railroad cars.

Vegetation and controllable obstructions within 150 yards of railroad crossings should be removed. We favor increased penalties and strict enforcement of state and local laws regarding blocked crossings by trains.

Permanent and temporary closings of railroad crossings should be examined on an individual, case-by-case basis. We oppose blanket closing of railroad crossings based on criteria such as absence of warning devices and proximity to other crossings. Before the closing of any crossing the Department of Roads should be required to consider the economic impact to agriculture, needs of individual farmers, impact to the local community, as well as access issues for emergency vehicles. We support the use of hearings to ensure citizen input and support maintaining the counties' final authority on the closing of railroad crossings.