

By Shelby Friesz

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Nebraska drivers must signal a turn or lane change for 100 feet before turning. But what if they decide they want to turn while idling at a stop sign?

Paul Schumacher of Columbus introduced a bill (LB 83) Thursday, Jan. 10, to make an exception for stopped vehicles in the law requiring a turn signal in the last 100 feet before a turn or lane change.

"It's a little fix-it bill," Schumacher said. "All this does is says that you've got to signal for a reasonable period of time before you make the turn. You don't have to back up and take a run at it for 140 feet."

Columbus lawyer Bill Kurtenbach brought the issue to Schumacher's attention after trying a case involving a violation to the turn signal statute.

After pulling up to a stop sign from a nearby diagonal parking spot, a police officer stopped his client for signaling a turn too late, Kurtenbach said.

"What if the parking spot is less than 100 feet from the corner?" he said.

Kurtenbach said he decided to involve Schumacher because he believed the statute was wrong because it did not reflect how people drive.

"This particular way it's written now puts people in a bad spot," Schumacher said. "They don't want to break the law, but as a practical matter they have to."

While it is not a large change to the law, Kurtenbach said it could help Nebraskans avoid this common problem altogether.

The bill is assigned to the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee for a hearing and further action.

Schumacher said it is not big enough to rate as priority legislation but could come out of committee as a general fix-it bill.