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to convince the powerful business lobby, Flicker said.

"If we win it, the way we'll win it is for economic reasons," said Carol Kelsey, a Senate Transportation Committee staff member. "If we were going to do anything, we really had to get the private sector on board."

care, \$297,000 in emergency services, \$4.4 million in insurance administration, \$4.3 million in legal and court services and \$10,800 in coroners' services for a total of \$20.2 million, the report states.

Traffic accidents are the leading cause of work-related

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— Denny Jones

"The business community is now going to become very active in its support" because of the report, Cease said.

The report, "Safety Belt Use: Oregon's Cost-Saving Potential," states that implementing the law would "save a significant amount of money from reductions in lost productivity, medical health care, emergency services, insurance administration, legal, court and coroner costs."

Auto accident victims would have earned \$20.8 million in "taxable income" in 1985 if a seat-belt law had prevented their injuries, according to the report. "Costs to public revenue are incurred directly through aid to victims and victims' families, and indirectly through lost income-tax revenue."

In addition, the state of Oregon could have saved about \$315,000 in miscellaneous Adult and Family Service programs, \$10.9 million in medical

deaths, but the clincher may be that Oregon businesses pay about \$6.6 million in direct off-the-job costs.

Also, for every dollar directed to compensate the employee's injuries and lost wages, 10 more dollars are spent on indirect expenses, according to a U.S. Department of Transportation study.

Indirect costs include costs incurred from rescheduling, overtime wages, retraining, new-hires and temporary replacements.

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"This is compounded by the extra administrative costs to investigate the accident and the hidden costs of the temporary or permanent loss of a special employee who has accumulated specific knowledge, skills and personal contacts," the report states. "These factors effect (sic) an employer regardless of whether the accident was on or off the job."

While no organized coalition opposes the bill, "there is just what seems to be a natural constituency that believes it's an intrusion," Kelsey said. "What you'll find is there's a geographic thing that tells you how people are going to feel."

The Oregon Lifebelt Coalition

poll found Portland metropolitan-area residents buckle up 45 percent of the time while Eastern Oregon residents buckle up 13 percent of the time. In the Legislature, the most vocal opponents are also from Eastern Oregon.

Rep. Denny Jones, R-Ontario, explained the regional attitude.

"Just from a general standpoint, we're more conservative; we don't like government; we're more independent," he said. "We're law-abiding, tax-paying people, and we just don't like to be forced into anything."

Legislators don't dispute the statistics, but they do disagree that seat-belt use should be mandatory. "I'm not saying seat belts don't save lives," said Bob Brogiotti, R-La Grande.

"In fact, the statistics show what all the good it does," Jones said.

Jones said he doesn't like the bill because "it's just another layer of government to tell you what you have to do, and they're going to arrest you if you don't do it," he said.

"I don't believe in going too far in telling people how to run their lives," agreed Bill Markham, R-Riddle.

"If people want to be con-

trolled by government, why don't they run to Russia," Brogiotti demanded.

The car is the most regulated part of an automobile operator's life, Cease countered. "If it's reason for us to require everyone under 16 to buckle up, it's reason to require everyone over 16 to buckle up," she said.

"This is not some new intrusion, it's just a natural extension," Kelsey said.

Brogiotti believes enforcement of the under-16 law is already a problem, he said.

"So then what you do is add more fuel to the fire by putting us all under it," Brogiotti said.

"The law don't mean everyone's going to do it," Jones said.

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