

April 6, 1977

LB 62

Douglas County, they do not have that choice. So I would urge you to bring 62 to the floor.

PRESIDENT: Senator Kelly.

SENATOR KELLY: Mr. President, a question of Senator Chambers. Senator Chambers, will you enumerate for me the procedures or the many different ways that the citizens of Douglas County can district themselves for elections?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I don't understand what you are asking me.

SENATOR KELLY: Is there any way that the citizens of Douglas County can district themselves?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: No. The Legislature determines how counties are elected and that is the way they have done throughout the state. The Legislature determines the method of election.

SENATOR KELLY: And who sets the district's boundaries?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: The Election Commissioner, let me say.

SENATOR KELLY: That is good enough. I have got it. Now the only other way would be an initiative petition by the citizens in Douglas County? They can do it by initiative. Now my statement is made of this nature is that Senator Simon said that the only way that it can be done would be by this Legislature doing it and this is the inference that Senator Chambers makes and I just wanted to be sure that we all understood the same thing. So I guess what I would be asking is that has an initiative petition ever been presented to the voters in Douglas County? If it has not, it would show to me that there is not any initiative in Douglas County for district elections. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator George.

SENATOR GEORGE: Mr. President, members, in theory and philosophy I fully agree that the district elections are simply the better democratic system. I don't believe I have a single town or county in my district that isn't elected by district or by ward or by precinct. On the other hand we seem to be fooling around here with one particular county or city, and as previously explained, for some reasons way beyond me, we changed it in 1966 and now we are going to change it again. I, on the other hand, don't want to see that we are ramming it down somebody's throat. We should involve the people in Douglas County, the people in the City of Omaha. We should listen first whether this is what they really want, and if I get any indication that that is what they want, I will certainly vote for it but that time, in my opinion, hasn't come yet.

PRESIDENT: There are no other lights, Senator Newell, but did you want to be recognized?

SENATOR NEWELL: I would like to bring to the body's attention that the fact that the elected representatives, the elected representatives of the county of Douglas County have asked by a substantial majority, 4 to 1, that we move

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