

March 13, 1995

LB 337

LR 6

circulators, and then the court struck down not only our law, but every law in the country that did not allow for paid petition circulators. So we have struggled with how to identify paid petition circulators and legislation a few years ago I introduced would have had them wear a big badge saying "Paid Petition Circulator" and, again, there was a constitutional question raised with that and so we came to the conclusion, the compromise of at least including on the petition some identification that this was a paid circulator. However, what creative individuals would do would be to cover up that designation with a clip board or with a piece of paper so that people signing the petition didn't know that these were paid circulators and all Senator Schimek is suggesting, and I agree with, is that we at least have red ink, some way to particularly draw attention to the fact that these are paid circulators. If we can't ban them, if we have to allow for them, at least the public should know that that's who they are dealing with. It makes a difference to people I think. If somebody comes up and they're legitimately, personally concerned about an issue and asking for somebody to sign a petition, that's one thing, but it's another if somebody is getting paid 75 cents or a dollar a signature trying to collect money as they collect signatures and I think the public reacts appropriately. So letting people know that that's the situation I think is just public information that should be available as somebody is confronted with a petition and having the red ink might help draw attention to that fact, so we've had people somewhat abusing the previous law we passed by hiding that information and this would make it a little harder to do, so I would ask for your support for the Schimek amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Bernard-Stevens, your light is next, followed by Senators Robinson, Schimek, Janssen, Witek and Bohlke.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body, I rise for...make a couple comments, being a part of the Government Committee that put the committee amendments together on this particular bill. Quite honestly, I think this bill is even more important than LR 6CA. That's is the portion where not necessarily the Schimek amendment, but the bill itself deals with what I think is the crucial part of the petition process, any of the processes that we have in the State of Nebraska, and that is how can we make sure that if a group of people get together, they write a...what they believe a