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regular grand jurors will enter another phase. They go into a room where they conduct their deliberations. So the proceedings are distinct from the deliberations. Under the present law the alternates sit with the grand jurors during the proceedings. But it is clear they are not to participate in the deliberations, unless for some reason one or more must replace one or more regular grand jurors who are disqualified for reasons stated in the law. What this bill.... Oh, and it takes a vote of 12, at least, of the 16 to hand up an indictment, more than a simple majority. If a simple majority vote to hand up an indictment, but you don't have 12, the result is what is known as an a "no true bill", which simply means no indictment came from the grand jury. When a grand jury had sat in Douglas County neither the presiding judge, nor the special prosecutor told any of the three alternates they could not participate in the proceedings, because alternates have always participated in the proceedings, always. But they do not participate in the deliberations, and not one of these alternates participated in the deliberations. There are people such as myself who believe that the judge who threw out the indictment did not like the result, so he seized upon this as a reason to throw out the indictment. That is an opinion, and I want to make that clear. When he was writing his opinion, the judge declared that nothing happened which prejudiced the rights of the defendant, who happened to be a police officer. Despite the questions that were asked by the alternates, despite the comments made by the alternates, and you notice I'm making that word plural. The World-Herald and others zeroed in on one alternate, a black woman, but all three participated, all three. But it shows that the media do not always present a full picture when they have an agenda they are trying to reach. The judge said that there had been no prejudicing of the defendant's rights as a result of the participation of the alternates. He wrote that he had looked at the legislative history of the provision of law relative to the role of alternates. And based on his reading of the law, despite the history that indicated alternates are to participate in proceedings, but not the deliberations, he was going to read the law strictly to say that they are not to participate in the proceedings either. He had to acknowledge that it is foolish or pointless might have been his term to have the alternates sitting with the jurors but unable to participate. I add to that the fact that, if one or more alternates must replace one