

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

May 15, 2001

LB 851
LR 7

22,000 plus people in Gage County and however many there are in Saline, to them the topic of conversation is, what happened? Who ran over us? Where did that train come from? I see the tracks on my chest but I'm not sure I've really had an opportunity to be part of this process. And let's not forget that. I hope that somehow the dialog that we have been having comes back to the facts that we've talked about in that the original Redistricting Committee plan, as it was presented to this body with the committee amendments, is one which I'm supportive of, which I can return to and have no heartburn. I will have an amendment, I just filed. It will be coming up in whatever process we get to that will tweak that map to be able to get to zero deviation which, hopefully, will satisfy some of those purists on the floor of the Legislature. I don't think it's necessary. I think Senator Coordsen's arguments were very valid in that the intentions of the Redistricting Committee were pure. I think they'll stand. They are not suspect. I think they'll stand court scrutiny as far as deviations are concerned, and I would like to refer, as we talked about a 1960 something Supreme Court decision yesterday that was used in illustrating why we had to have basically zero deviation, I will refer you to a Supreme Court decision, a later decision in 1983, Karcher v. Daggett, which, in effect, and I will read from the decision: We have never denied that apportionment is a political process or that state legislatures could pursue legitimate secondary objectives as long as those objective were consistent with a good faith effort to achieve population equality at the same time. I think it has been very clear within this body, within the Redistricting Committee, within the committee amendments, that that has always been the intent. It's been that...those issues that have been made a matter of the public record. I think it will stand scrutiny. I have no question about that, and I think later court decisions and those cited yesterday certainly illustrate that point. So let's not lose sight of what it is, and, Senator Quandahl, you're absolutely correct, LR 7 is not a constitutional amendment. What it is is a guide. It's a resolution that guides this Legislature. It is one that was proposed by a substantial number of people and adopted by a substantial number of people, and I think it's a good guide. It is a good format, a good model for us to follow. And I don't think we're doing that by splitting counties and doing what