

February 9, 1979

half the members of the delegates at the next convention be men and half be women?

SENATOR NEWELL: That is one of the problems under which this bill is necessary. This bill does not really address that. It says that this bill will allow a political party, if it chooses, to elect its delegates at a convention as opposed to on the ballot and that is what this bill does. It deals with that problem which we would have if we were to elect half delegates, men, half of the delegates, women. Also there is a problem with the question of proportional representation, and if you know what proportional representation is, Senator Cullan, that is where you have to choose delegates in the same relationship to the number of votes they got on the presidential preference primary. So what this would do, this bill would allow the Secretary of State to just have a presidential preference primary and not have the Democratic delegates elected on the ballot. They would be then elected at a convention subsequent to the preferential primary. So this will allow us to do that if the Democratic Party so indicates it needs to do that and we are not sure we will. The problem is is that we may and we don't want to be out of compliance with state law. We don't want to have a very complicated delegate selection process on the ballots. So this will allow us two options.

SENATOR CULLAN: I am certain the Democratic Party would not want to violate state law. Senator Newell, why was this bill not introduced previously?

SENATOR NEWELL: That is a very good question and I think the answer simply is this. The National Delegate Compliance Commission is still meeting. In fact, we have asked for a number of waivers and we are not sure we can have the waivers. In fact, just recently some people from the Democratic National Committee said we could not have the waivers, and for that reason, the Democratic Party in Nebraska has decided that maybe we will be jeopardizing our whole delegation to the National Convention if we don't move in this direction.

SENATOR CULLAN: Thank you for your explanation, Senator Newell. I am quite concerned about the contents of this particular bill as I understand them. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Keyes.

SENATOR KEYES: Mr. Speaker and fellow Senators, there is going to be another election bill brought in Monday morning by Allen Beermann and we certainly need this bill of Newell's