

March 27, 1979

LB 234

CLERK: Yes, sir, I have an amendment offered by Senator DeCamp. The amendment reads as follows: strike Committee amendment 1 on Page 2, line 22, strike 18 and insert 19.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR DeCAMP: Well, Mr. President, the Legislature decided some years ago to say young people growing up became adults at 19 years of age. For decades before that we said they were adults at 21, and when we said they were adults at 21, we based almost...well based all of our laws on that principle...right to sign contracts, right to be on juries, and so on and so forth. Now, when the bill was proposed, the group proposing it went down to 18. I felt that was a little young. The Committee felt it was a little young, and their Committee amendments repudiated 18, and went to 21. The proposal by Senator Reutzel and some of the others including myself wanted to make a number of other changes in the Committee amendments. At this point after talking to Senator Nichol, talking to people on this issue who have worked on it, little Laurie Bellows from Senator Reutzel's office, who spent about two years working on it, it seems to be the consensus that if we're going to say young people are adults at 19, then it's only reasonable that in this area, serving on a jury they be allowed to do it once they reach adulthood, which is 19. And that is all the amendment does. It doesn't go as far as any of the other proposals that some had earlier. It is strictly that. It just says 19, and I would urge adoption of the amendment. As I say, it's my understanding, and correct me if I'm wrong, but Senator Nichol does not oppose this, and I don't know whether he supports it strongly or anything, but it's my understanding he does not oppose it. Is that correct, Senator Nichol?

PRESIDENT: Senator Nichol, do you wish to respond?

SENATOR NICHOL: As Chairman of the Committee, I'd like to...Senator DeCamp, I personally, and the other members of the Judiciary can speak for themselves, I personally would rather keep it at 21, however, if we're going to make everything at 19 very good. My actual...my attitude toward this, Senator DeCamp is that you leave this up to a judge to judge for himself the people between 19 and 21 years of age whether or not he thinks they're mature enough, settled down enough to serve on his jury.

SENATOR DeCAMP: Yes, okay. So, as I say, the amendment then allows them...of course, there is a complete jury