

SENATOR HABERMAN: Very well, thank you. I will rise to oppose the amendment of Senator Rumery's to put a majority in and I would like to see the two-thirds majority remain with the bill. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Wesely, do you wish to speak to the Rumery amendment?

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like to oppose the Rumery amendment, quite frankly that if this amendment is put onto this...my previous amendment, I would like to go back to the original bill and just forget all about any sort of effort to compromise and come to a reasonable position on this legislation. My original position, keep this in mind, was to not allow any sort of flexibility of the power districts and they would always have to let for bids any contract on repair, maintenance, reconstruction or remodeling if it was over \$50,000 and I don't think that is unreasonable, quite frankly. I feel I have given in too much as it is perhaps with this amendment. I would rather go back to the original bill than allow the Rumery amendment. My feeling is that what we did was we said, okay, all right, in extreme cases, we will allow you a little bit of flexibility but we want to, number one, be assured by an engineer that this is a case where you cannot let it for bid, and they have to certify to that, and then, number two, we place the two-thirds restriction on the board so that they have to be extra certain that the supermajority of the board thinks that, yes, we shouldn't let this for bid, that it is in the public interest to not do this and it is better for the district and the ratepayers to go ahead and negotiate this contract. And so we put that extra barrier there specifically because we want to make it hard for them to not let for bids on these contracts. I think we want to have that sort of a policy in the State of Nebraska, when a public entity is serving the State of Nebraska, is in line for a contract that is going to be over \$50,000, we are talking about a lot of money, and they should let that for bid if at all possible, and I think that has been the big problem we have seen here. This bill allows them some flexibility but the Rumery amendment I think would let them have too much flexibility and I think we ought to go back to the original bill, if we are going to do that, because the whole point is we have put up some barriers, we allow them some flexibility, and if there is a supermajority in support of the bill and there is some evidence by the engineer that there is a need not to let it for bid, then, okay, in that extreme case, ya, you can go ahead and negotiate it. But we want to make it hard for them to do it and that is why we have the two-thirds vote on there.