

so I can read it to you. If you have some comments, go ahead and make them and I'll just search for that provision.

SENATOR WESELY: Okay, I guess the only thing I was concerned about, I think the bill is fine, absolutely needed and I know because I've participated in some initiative petition drives and it is very difficult to get petitions clarified to make sure that they are accurate and I think what we want to do is make it as easy as possible for the public to take petitions to get involved in initiative and referendum. It is the public speaking and I certainly support that effort and I use that to try and get change in some different areas so I think it is a good idea. I just was wondering if the bill did change some percentages, if it would take more voters to sign a petition in order to get an initiative or referendum and those sort of things because I think the intent of the bill is to make it easier for the public to use these and I just wanted to make sure that is very clear, I guess. Did you find it? Okay.

SENATOR LANDIS: Yes. We used as a model the existing standards in Chapter 18 and it is 15% of registered voters for a general election submission, a 20% standard for special election and those are existing figures that appear in a number of the provisions on initiative and referendum. I can tell you that in home rule cities, home rule charter provisions control so that in Lincoln, Omaha and Grand Island they retain the authority that they have right now to set their own standards.

SENATOR WESELY: Would you describe the bill then overall as encouraging and making it easier to initiate a petition drive one way or the other?

SENATOR LANDIS: I would not say that it...it does in some respects. What it does is it creates a mechanism that will eliminate the technical flaws that could be later used to defeat the circulation of a petition. By allowing this perspective petition you'll know in advance before you ever begin whether or not your petition is in the appropriate form. Right now you could pass petitions, they could be badly drawn and at some later point after the signatures are collected but before the election it could be thrown out. So it does make it easier by clarifying the ground rules but it doesn't reduce the standards or the signatures standards that we need now.

SENATOR WESELY: Oh, okay. That is very helpful. Okay, on that basis I will certainly support the bill, and as I said I was involved in some petition drives here in Lincoln and a problem that Senator Landis identified with those of us