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LB 647

topics and issues which impact on state initiatives in Nebraska. I truly believe that the initiative and referendum process should not be taken lightly. It is a very important process and it is either amending the Constitution or changing a state statute. This bill will not, and I repeat, it will not make it more difficult to circulate a petition. It will just make the process more thorough. If you will notice, there was no one that opposed the bill at the public hearing and therefore I move for the advancement of this bill to E & R Initial.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Dworak.

SENATOR DWORAK: Senator Clark, I have a question of Senator Hefner.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Hefner, would you yield, please?

SENATOR HEFNER: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

SENATOR DWORAK: Senator Hefner, what kind of problems did you come across during your interim study that dictates this legislation? What kind of abuses have we had in the State of Nebraska in the area of petition circulation and in the area of initiative and referendum that caused you to bring forth this corrective legislation?

SENATOR HEFNER: Senator Dworak, one of the problems that I came across is groups that were circulating a petition coming from the cities out into the rural areas. Many of them did not know even what the petition was about and a lot of them would leave them on counters of businesses in a local community and take another petition to get signatures. And so I just thought that it would be better if they would be registered voters in that particular county.

SENATOR DWORAK: Well, were these rural people signing these petitions that they didn't know or understand? Do most rural people just sign something at face value without questioning, or...the people of the rural areas I represent, they are pretty cautious and pretty careful. Now, have we had a lot of rural signatures that were obtained by these city...these folks from the city, city slickers?

SENATOR HEFNER: Senator Dworak, that depends upon whether you talk about residents of these small towns being rural people, but, yes, some of them did sign these petitions and didn't know what they were about.

SENATOR DWORAK: And you think now that this bill with rural