

SENATOR LANDIS: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I would oppose the amendments. Although I was trying to make annotations as I was going down in reacting to them, I will try to respond to the questions that Senator Beutler raises in half the time since that is the way the rules permit me to respond. The law right now is that a majority of those present on a housing authority can bind the board. A quorum is three. A board usually has five. There are housing authorities throughout this state. They are not always large. There are many small towns that have housing authorities and there are problems with getting an appointment from all five seats. That is one of the reasons we had made an amendment earlier this session to allow the appointment of that fifth member by being a city council member. Frankly, I do not know of any evidence of abuse that says that the majority of those present cannot bind a housing authority. Perhaps this is in recognition that in fact there are small towns that have housing authorities that in fact rent only a duplex, and that is the sum total of their function, and on those kinds of matters I am not so sure that the law hasn't been reasonable. I certainly have no reason to suspicion or evidence that it has been abused and that has been the law for a number of years. That, of course, is up to you as to how you want to vote. With respect to the merger of housing authorities, this is a matter of considerable evidence before the Urban Affairs Committee. We had a four hour hearing on this issue. Ultimately the Urban Affairs Committee decided that only in Omaha was there the specter of a merger of housing authorities between the Douglas County Housing Authority and the Omaha Housing Authority that might be contradictory to the reasons why we had brought the bill, why the bill were brought, which was to allow the merger of smaller housing authorities into a group that could function together. In Lancaster County there is no Lancaster County Housing Authority which operates in competition with the Lincoln Housing Authority. So you do not have the same situation. Lincoln did not ask to be excluded from this provision. The Housing Authority representative, Alan Peterson, was present and did not ask for the City of Lincoln to be excused nor has our City Council nor has any representative from the City of Lincoln that I know of. The general rule should be where more effective mergers can exist and they are consensual which these are on both parties parts they should be allowed to merge. I see no reason to justify excluding Lincoln from something they have not asked to be excluded from which would require their consent in the first place. As to the fair market value, it is entirely possible that a housing authority may wish to utilize this property disposition by giving it to a charitable organization and not