

April 6, 1982

LB 688

the November ballot but they weren't ready at the time because we didn't discover until that day that the committee hadn't, in fact, put the amendment on the bill when it advanced it. We had assumed all along that was the case. So that communication mix-up obviously has irritated Senator Vickers and some other individuals such as it has the editorial writer for the Lincoln Journal, but that doesn't mean that our intent wasn't clear in our own minds. We just had trouble communicating that to other people and for that I guess we should apologize. Nevertheless it is a fair and reasonable route to take at this time. What we are saying is the voters of Lincoln should have the choice on whether or not they want to go to district elections. That choice should be placed on the November ballot and if they decide to go with district elections, then that will be the system that we will follow. If they decide otherwise, then that is the choice that they make. There is also the option down the road whichever way they decide in November to change the system that is in effect. We think that is reasonable as well. The concept is no different than what we are talking about in other areas. The Omaha city sales tax we put on the ballot the question before the voters in Omaha. They voted to keep and have a city sales tax increase for Omaha. Similarly in Lincoln we will place on the November ballot or hopefully we will that there will be 591 and other questions to the voters. Do they or do they not want to increase the city sales tax here in Lincoln? We are asking the same opportunity on district elections to put the question to the vote of the people. Whether that is unreasonable or whether that is unfair, I don't know. And Senator Vickers' outrage that he has expressed to us here doesn't make any sense in light of that. If his concern is to let the voters of Lincoln decide what sort of school board election system they have then that is what this bill would accomplish and that is what this amendment would accomplish. We merely ask that that question be placed on the November ballot. The problem is this, the bill is so late in the session and it is at this time going to be very difficult at this late date if it does pass in its present form without the amendment that we are now considering for these people to undertake a petition drive. It is already into April and I am not sure what the deadline would be on filing the petitions, but this was not an opportunity that was made clear to those individuals supporting district elections and they would like to see a change if possible before next year. So they are asking for a chance to put it to a vote of the people on the November ballot and at that time the citizens of Lincoln will have a chance to express themselves. Again, I feel that is reasonable. Again, I feel that is fair, and

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