

SENATOR LINDSAY: Mr. President, members, I rise in opposition to this bill. I will just restate my reasons from the committee hearing. I believe the county court...the purpose of the county court is to handle some of the smaller matters that can be moved along a little more quickly...excuse me, a little more quickly. What this bill would do is to extend that time. Right now, in county court an answer date will come 20 days after the filing of the case. In district court the answer date comes 30 days after service of process. What effectively this bill does is to extend the answer date in county court from 20 days...it can extend it out as much as three weeks. County court, of course, does have a jurisdictional limit of \$10,000 and does not handle equity cases. I don't believe the real complex cases, that require the extreme amount of time necessary to formulate an answer is necessary in county court. For that reason, I would urge that the bill not be advanced.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you, sir. Senator Kristensen, further discussion.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body, I appreciate Senator Lindsay's comments about wanting county court to move along quicker. What this really does is it makes two courts...makes the rules the same and so that you don't have two different sets of rules in two different sets of courts. And the small amount of time that this would extend, 10 days, is just minimal. It's very important, I think, that we have uniform rules among our courts so that people, when they come in, understand what the rules are and there aren't mistakes between two different courts. And I would urge that this bill be advanced.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Ashford.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members, I was listening to the arguments on this bill and especially the argument given by John Lindsay in opposition to the bill and I concur with him. I think that we have to remember that the district court and the county courts are two separate entities. The county court has its own rules, the district court has its own rules, and I think that, as John has stated, the purpose of the county court is to give as expeditious as possible a hearing to a case which has a lesser dollar amount involved. And I think it really is unnecessary, at least in my experience, to extend that period beyond the 20 days. The county court does,