

Claims Court, thereby achieving uniformity at all three levels of courts of original jurisdiction, as it were. I'll tell you, I think John's objection to the bill is in the basic change from the county court to the district court, at least that is what we talked about in an informal conversation. And, frankly, I thought he made a good point. I was thinking about voting against the bill on this round. But, at this point, with this amendment, we are trying to match the Small Claims Court with the level of formality of the county and district court. Unfortunately, I think it has a tendency to undercut what the Small Claims Court is designed to do. A Small Claims Court does not have the presence of lawyers, does not have the exchange of a number of pretrial motions or heavily litigated lawyer-drafted forms. You walk up to your court office, they give you a form, you write out the nature of the thing that brings you to court, in your own handwriting, you pay them about six bucks to get the thing served, and it's meant to be a citizen-generated kind of lawsuit. Thirty days is common for the purpose of a more intricate lawyer represented case, because there may be some kind of filing of motion. There may be some kind of jurisdictional argument. Lawyers have schedules that are pretty difficult to accommodate and you need some time frame on that. You probably have to draft an intricate response, perhaps. Thirty days makes sense. I can go forward either with voting against the bill and leaving the county court where it is, or I can go forward by voting for the bill, as it currently now is, with 30 days for both those courts. But this amendment tries to throw into that boat the Small Claims Court which is a different fish. This is meant to be immediate, low cost and citizen-generated justice. It is not meant to be the same level of use of attorneys, the same level of exchange of legal documents and forms, the same level of deliberative process. For that reason, I think that 30 days gets in the way of the Small Claims Court, ritualizes it, formalizes it and makes the case less of what it is, sort of a problem-solving side of our court system. John, I understand your original argument. I would consider voting against the bill, but I'm going to vote no on the amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President. I would rise to oppose the amendment as well. I think Senator Landis has correctly characterized the Small Claims Court. And I believe that our citizens of this state would be extremely disappointed