

please.

SENATOR BAACK: Yes, Mr. Speaker and members. Now, after the committee amendments have been amended by Senator Labedz's amendment, I would urge you to not support the committee amendments. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the adoption of the committee amendments? Senator Withem, your light is on, followed by Senators Chambers and Wesely.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, not knowing the desires and the intent of the introducer of this bill at this point I'm going to follow the lead and the urging of the committee chair in voting against the committee amendments at this point. That will be a way of reconsidering the Labedz amendment. The Labedz amendment is one with which I do not agree. You've heard from a couple of the senators from Lancaster County who are indicating that it is...they live in a county that has the current system that is now the committee amendments and they are uncomfortable with that. I think I guess parenthetically I guess I'd like to say I think it's somewhat unfair to chastise a senator on the floor for not bringing a bill in, particularly a freshman senator's first session, to right all of the wrongs that may exist in a given area. If I were to do that I'd probably have a hundred different bills that I'd bring in and we just don't have time to do that. But they've indicated personal frustrations with the system that we have, and I tend to believe what they have to say. I live in the largest county in the state that is a pure district election county. We have nearly 100,000 people in Sarpy County, we have five commissioners that are elected, each one nominated by district and elected by district, and I think it is a very good system of providing representation in our county. We have a very diverse county, we have Bellevue to the east, we have the cities of...the growing cities of Papillion and LaVista in the middle section of our county, we have a diverse population group that is in essence an extension of south Omaha, represented by another commissioner, and the rural portion of our county, represented by yet another commissioner. The fact that each of those areas gets to elect a commissioner means that their voice is going to be heard on the county commissioners. If we didn't have that system, I think there would be portions of our county that would go without representation. It's a philosophical point, I guess, on whether