

to its citizens that local approval would be required. I believe that among the original conditions for acting as host state was the requirement that a host community must be voluntarily involved in the process. We repeat this in our legislation last year, LB 1092, where we said, and I quote, "that the community must be actively and voluntarily involved". This we passed last year in LB 1092. The developer stated on numerous occasions that it would not site a facility where it was not wanted. Now we have an opportunity to live up to those promises and we can require voter approval. Secondly, I believe that the election process is most fair to local residents on both sides of the issue because it allows them to vote in an anonymous manner without the pressures of influence by people circulating petitions, for instance. It allows them to vote in the privacy of a voting booth. It does carry out the democratic process. I know there are going to be arguments against this. I would like to address some of those arguments right now. A statement has been made recently that such a voting requirement violates the federal mandate, that siting be based solely on technical merit without political or popular influence. That statement has been made. This just doesn't hold because it's obvious that nontechnical influences have already been brought to bear in the siting process. To argue that an election provision would suddenly spoil a pure and impartial selection procedure is rather silly. This leads to another point. Nothing in this amendment would suggest that the facility be placed in a technical...technically unsuitable site. I wouldn't do that. We just think that the developer must meet the standard of technical acceptance along with having public approval of the site. I also don't follow the argument that this requirement discriminates against or persecutes a particular industry, although we might get that feeling the way we're being lobbied. There is no reason that that should be. This is not true. We have already addressed the facility separately from other forms of development and we have numerous provisions for local approval when public interests impact or justify these measures and I cite an example, the right for people to vote on public utilities or school building issues. This is just part of our democratic process. Resistance to voter approval probably stems from a fear that it will create a burden for the developer. Quite frankly, I think the developer is faring quite well from this whole situation. And requiring voter approval is hardly an unreasonable request. Senator Schmit said on the floor here the other day that we need to be open and up front with the citizens of our state and I believe