

launched a campaign against the district concept and it lost at the polls, it lost.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Chambers, please. (Gavel.) Go ahead, Senator.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: It lost at the polls because a heavy, expensive lobbying effort against district elections was undertaken. There has been concern expressed throughout the state about the Supreme Court's ruling that petition circulators can be paid because those with the money can put it up and carry the issues that they want because of their power to produce money and so influence the vote. Once the Legislature saw what was happening in Omaha, the fact that black people were systematically excluded from the council, the Legislature imposed district elections. The Omaha World-Herald opposed it. A number of people on the city council opposed it and the elitists in the City of Omaha opposed it. They were apoplectic when they found out that the Legislature had passed that bill and Governor Thone had signed it. Once the district system was in place and all areas of the city had the opportunity to select a person of their choice and put them on the council, when they were then polled, 70 percent, just about, said that they are in favor of district elections. So the fact that a high-powered lobbying campaign can defeat an issue or obtain its passage does not necessarily mean that the will of the people is reflected or that their best interests are served. As a Legislature we have an obligation to judge these issues. I had said repeatedly, and my remarks were misconstrued by the World-Herald in an editorial, that the U.S. Supreme Court is the one that has ruled that at large elections of city councils, of county boards, boards of supervisors and other elective bodies, those that are elected at large dilute the voting strength of nonwhite minorities. And because that voting strength is diluted systematically, the court has imposed district elections. That's the comment I made the other day. It's the comment that I make now. Senator Labeledz slightly misstated the record on a couple of occasions when she said that when the council was by districts she only had one person on the council speaking against these various stink plants. Well, she got that incorrect. The stink plants were put into South Omaha when the voting was at large, when there was nobody representing South Omaha. It was after district elections came that those things were taken out of South Omaha. So, she stated what happened, but she stated the wrong time when it occurred. At large, South