

have been wronged. By having a two-year delay, I don't believe we are carrying out the responsibilities of the government that the people want, that the people approved when they passed the Constitution over 100 years ago. We looked at a number of different proposals, one, of which, was to establish a Supreme Court with nine justices and have those nine justices broken up into three-judge panels, as a similar system that they use in the circuit court, federal circuit court. It was our belief, in the committee, that this was the best system that we were given or the options that we had. No one likes the idea of having to deal with an appellate court system. I think everyone in the body would like to have a system of government that if you have an appeal from a district court that the Supreme Court would make a determination within months after that appeal, but that isn't the way the system is right now in this state. We looked to other states to determine what was the best way to deal with a two-year delay, and most states have gone to this type of appellate court system. The one issue and the most important thing I think that you have to remember about LR 8 is that the people of the State of Nebraska will have to decide whether they want this system. If the people of the state say, no, we would prefer to have this two-year delay continue on so that we can have a direct appeal to the Nebraska Supreme Court, so be it. It won't do anything if the people reject this particular resolution, but I think we owe it to the people of the State of Nebraska, considering the delay that is involved with an appeal from district court, to at least give them the opportunity to vote on this particular proposal. And if they approve it, then we should approve it as well. I urge the adoption of the committee amendments and eventual passage of LR 8. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. The gentleman from the 6th Legislative District, please, Senator Ashford.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Mr. President. I am not going to talk either in favor or against the bill at this point but I do have some questions that I would like answered, if Senator Kristensen, just...and he has probably gone over these before but I just want to clarify in my own mind, and these are rather rudimentary, really, because I just want to get the sequence of events and see exactly where we are going. Last year, specifically, what did we do vis-a-vis the appellate court issue?

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Kristensen, if you would answer.