

and it is the standard language that we have. Some people talked about the politics, having the Legislature involved in this decision. Well, the politics of electing judges, I think, is too much, too great a level of politics and I don't support going back to those days. But, at the same time, what we're talking about here is a compromise. A legislative confirmation allows us to have that accountability to the people, allows us to open up the system, as I talked about before, without going all the way back to judges raising campaign funds and going door to door and campaigning and doing all that. They don't have to. All that has to happen is at least the Legislature has a role to play and to provide some of that input that we lost in some ways by not electing judges but in some ways we have benefited greatly by not having that sort of political influence. Accountability is really what we're talking about. Accountability is what we need more of. Now, I think it's also important to note that we do handle many different appointments and I have looked at...just glanced at a few and the Boiler Safety Code Advisory Board is one of those. The Dry Bean Commission is another one of those, and the Livestock Auction Market Board is another one of those. And the list goes on and on and on. It seems to me when you have an appointment as important as a judge, if we can spend time and look at some of these other appointments, certainly we can find the time and take...make the effort to look at judicial appointments. That's a very important position and should have the role of the Legislature involved. Now, we not only do the one sort of appointments that I just went through but some very important appointments of different agency heads and what have you and I think we have done a good job at handling that. We rarely reject people. We usually confirm people, but at least there is a chance for the public to make a statement, to be involved and know what's happening. And I think that's exactly what we're talking about on this judicial proposal. Now, the Bar Association hasn't taken a position on this issue yet. I don't think they have had time to do that but, at least, at this point they haven't necessarily opposed it. And it seems to me that we could adopt this amendment. We could work on language. The hearing will be next week. By the time that this issue comes up again on the floor, we will have had time to review this. The public will have had time to respond and we'll have a chance to further modify the language. But, as Senator Ashford said, the concept is clear. The concept is not one that we have any difficulty understanding. And the question here is, can you, at this point, support the concept?