

PRESIDENT: Senator Chizek, please.

SENATOR CHIZEK: Mr. President, colleagues, LB 642 is a bill that we had originally heard in the Judiciary Committee and at the time of the hearing for LB 642, if you remember, some judges in western Nebraska had found that the right to bear arms amendment passed by the voters in November of 1988 had repealed the right of the state to, in any way, limit possession of firearms to felons, incompetents, minors and so forth. The committee, at that time, had decided that it was necessary to have a vehicle on the floor of the Legislature with which to ask the people of the State of Nebraska to again vote on this issue if the Supreme Court would have agreed with the western Nebraska judges. In effect, the committee amendments would put on the ballot the repeal of the right to bear arms amendment so that the state could once again keep firearms from dangerous and immature individuals not capable of handling a firearm safely. However, since the committee met and voted on this issue, the Supreme Court decided that notwithstanding the language of the right to bear arms amendment that the state may still regulate the possession and the use of firearms under circumstances where the health and the safety of the general citizenry is put at risk. Therefore, I would ask you today to vote against the adoption of the committee amendments, as the amendments the way they now stand would serve no useful purpose. If the committee amendments are not adopted, LB 642 will be in its original form. As you know, it's original form provides a waiting period before a person can buy a handgun. I will add also at this time that I have been meeting, since this issue surfaced, with Senator Ashford and members of the NRA. I met with them as late as this morning. I have the assurances from both groups that they will sit down and try and work out something that is mutually agreeable on this issue. I see no reason to hold the bill, but I would ask that you vote against the committee amendments, to vote red on the committee amendments, and at that point in time I will address further my meetings with the NRA and Senator Ashford. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Chizek. I have five lights on. It's unlikely that you want to talk about voting red on the amendments, but if you do, please indicate. Senator Wesely. Senator Haberman.

SENATOR HABERMAN: I would like to speak to the committee amendment.