

January 14, 1991

bill introductions. When you limit bills, when you limit debate, you limit ideas. And, in my estimation, trying to offer the opportunity for people to take ideas and stretch them, and in some cases stretch them out in debate that takes hours upon hours, and days after days, in some ways it finally takes that to draw people's attention to various issues. Whether you agree or disagree with the abortion issue, I think you come back to the fundamental question of whether or not this body wants to take the step of limiting debate. And I think that, in my own mind, I feel very comfortable with the idea that that is wrong. There are certain instances when that is going to cause a problem, when it's going to frustrate you, when you're going to be very unhappy and angry with that decision. But I think ultimately it reflects well on this body that we haven't had cloture rules, and I think it reflects well, hopefully, that we will not take that step today. There are a couple of very unique reasons why this Legislature ought not to do that. Besides the fact that open debate allows for minority viewpoints to be heard, when otherwise they would be run over and left lying in the road, when the majority has clearly the power and strength to deal with whatever issue they want to deal with, but, in addition, this is a Unicameral, a Unicameral, a one-house body, a one-house body. We do not have a second house in which to take an issue for debate and consideration. We have a very streamlined process, a very direct line process where we have three considerations here for this very same body, and then a vote and action is taken, ultimately, one way or the other on a bill. And when you do not have a second body, you do not have the give and take between the two houses that you would have in the Congress or every other Legislature in this country. So, we have taken the extraordinary step, perhaps, of having no cloture rule, because we are unique. We're a unique Unicameral, and we are, I think, taking a step in the wrong direction to go to a cloture rule because we do not have to follow what other Legislature's have done, perhaps, because they are different than us. We have not got the opportunity for the give and take between two houses within our legislative branch that other states have. So, I point that out to you just to, once again, show why Nebraska has done this. I think there are a lot of good reasons for it. And I simply feel as a fundamental role that this Legislature takes, trying to be open to debate, open to ideas,...

SENATOR WARNER: One minute, Senator.