

an option to elect a clerk, and those under 6,000 had no such option. What the amendment does is simply include a situation where those counties over 7,000 must, and those under 7,000 will have the option. The committee did not feel that it was necessary to preclude those under the 6,000 level from having that option but simply make it optional at either end and that would be the breaking point. They must elect over 7,000 and the county board, through their own election, can deem whether or not they want the optional opportunity to elect or appoint at the below 7,000 level. And that's simply the committee amendments.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Conway. Senator Coordsen, do you want to speak to the amendments?

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Madam President, and members of the body, I rise to support the committee amendments. This is, again, an example where we can clean up statutes and provide a solution that will work into the future without this body having to come back in and make adjustments in statute. So I would encourage your support of this amendment. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Coordsen. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Madam President, members of the Legislature, I rise in opposition to the committee amendment. And I haven't had a chance to discuss this with Senator Coordsen or Senator Conway or Senator Bernard-Stevens, but let me just open up and tell you that I have my doubts about why we ever elect any clerk of the district court. Have you ever thought about what the concept is of a clerk of the district court? What function do they serve that has any particular element in an election campaign for there to be a contest brought to the voters of this state? It is merely a ministerial function, one in which. I don't know if these people would even... I guess I would ask a question of somebody who is more knowledgeable but do these clerks run on a partisan ballot? Most county offices are, so we have a Republican and Democrat running against each other about who will be a better clerk of the district court when, in fact, you have to wonder whether or not that function is one in which we should have purely an appointive position. What this committee amendment would do is allow all counties under 7,000 population to have an elected clerk, so we can have even more of these elections held throughout the state. The