

February 19, 1991

where the elector...election officials initials. It does not say signature, it says initials. Can you imagine a young man or woman in Saudi Arabia, perhaps voting for the first time, having to decide, or even knowing that the requirements are otherwise than are indicated on the ballot. Certainly there are no statute books available, and, therefore, you cannot expect that individual to know that Nebraska statute says the ballot must be signed in full. Let me go on to say this, that I believe that once the absentee voter has complied with all of those statutory requirements placed in the law by this Legislature, that the privilege then becomes an absolute right, and that right shall not be denied by an improper act of an election official, either by error, either through ignorance, or be it by design, and I think it is important that we recognize...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...that most of all the individual who voted in this instance fully complied, not substantially, fully complied with those additional requirements placed by this Legislature. The fact that the election officials failed to comply should not disenfranchise the voter. I believe that to allow that is to make a very serious error and to open up the situation for many, many more grievous errors in the future. I want to reemphasize, and I hope I will get a chance to speak again, that I will concede, although I disagree, that the absentee vote is a privilege, but that privilege then becomes an absolute guaranteed right once the individual voter has complied with those statutory requirements placed in the statutes by this Legislature. The voters, in these cases, did comply,...

SPEAKER BAACK: Time.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...therefore, the privilege becomes a right and this Legislature should not disenfranchise that voter. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Schmit. We will now go to Senator Lowell Johnson.

SENATOR L. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I must rise to respectfully dissent from the majority report of the Executive Board. As I stand before you and the other 48 members of the Legislature and I am sure each of you have the same feeling, or should have the same feeling, that as we