

official to error, perhaps not, but it seems like it certainly is possible. Then I know we all argue that we want to encourage people to vote and I have no disagreement about that except I was very intrigued with a Roger Welsch column a couple of weeks ago that appeared in the weekly's which the gist of it was there is some merit in the voter really wanting to vote, making extra effort. The gist of it was that maybe an informed voter was more important than just casting a vote and an informed voter tends to be the person who makes extra effort to make sure they do which, incidentally, was one of the things that bothered me a lot about an issue we had here a few weeks ago. We had people who made a special effort but contrary to the law, in my opinion, as it all worked out. And I'm very uneasy about what I think might be expanding those opportunities for error. So I will...probably I will be voting no but I wanted to make the explanation. It's not one of denying opportunities but for the reasons I have outlined primarily of waiting for the whole rewrite of election laws. I'm not sure it's very cost effective because so many would go to people who already perhaps are registered and if this is another opportunity for election official error. For those reasons, I would be hesitant to vote for the bill.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Warner. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Madam Chair, members of the body, I am in support of Senator Schimek's bill. I believe I'm even a co-sponsor of it. Just wanted to make a comment or two. For several years there were attempts in Nebraska, as there are in other states, to pass a program of mail-in voter registration and the arguments were very similar to those that Senator Schimek used. The arguments against it, very frankly, were very similar to those that Senator Warner used, the arguments between encouraging people to participate in the process versus the argument of maybe it's a good idea to have a few hoops that people vote for in order to assure that we get people to vote that really want to vote. Since that time though we instituted, oh gosh, it must have been five or six years ago that we instituted the mail-in registration program and I think it's worked quite effectively. You will still hear a few election officials grumbling about the extra work that it causes them but, above and beyond that, I have not heard very many people make any negative remarks about the system itself. It's an opportunity that the people have, people taking advantage of it and I think it's helped give some people that really do want to