

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker and members, I've been opposing 115. It has moved along and I guess my reason for the bracket today is not so much that I necessarily am totally opposed to 115, but I do think everyone in here should be more aware of what 115 actually does and especially its long-term impact on actually the United States. LB 115 as it affects Nebraska is open and logical. It is a plan that has been around for many years, but if every state in the Union would ultimately adopt this measure, it could have quite an impact on our election of the presidency as we know in the United States and ultimately in the world, considering the power of the presidency in the world. This amendment, or this particular bill, the district plan was proposed way back in the fifties. It might be of interest to you on the democratic side to know that Senator John Kennedy at that time worked hard to defeat that in the Senate. It became a Republican bill in 1969 when Senator Karl Mundt of South Dakota introduced the plan into the House, the Senate, and again it did not pass muster. My concern for this today and the reason I'd like to bracket is I actually would like to have an interim study on this so that everyone really understands what the potential impact of going to elector district elections. If you call, in Nebraska we would have three elected by districts, two continue to be elected at large. But the problem, as I see it, do we really understand where the impact is going to come as it ultimately impacts on the election of our presidency. I think we all recognize that in Congress today we've had a democratically controlled House and Senate for several years and we've had a Republican presidency for several years. It seems to be the will of the people, at least according to many analysts, to have such a make-up, feeling that districts and state senators and Congressmen are more responsive locally to their districts or states as the case may be. The presidency tends to be elected nationally. People seem to want someone that is responsible on national and, yes, an international level especially as it pertains to international affairs. But this potentially could be changed over the next 30 to 50 to 100 years if we would go this route using a district election. Ultimately, the president could be really more responsible to local districts considering where they may be. Now evidently the proponents of this want to consider, make Nebraska and other Midwestern and rural states have more of a say in national elections. Potentially, this could be true but I'd like to have you consider the larger view and consider