

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President, members, I would rise in opposition to the bracket motion and also to the amendment that would follow it requiring us to wait for 25 states to act on this issue. Nebraska is recognized nationally as an innovator and a leader as it comes to this particular body. A Unicameral is unique to the nation. We did take quite a bit of time to review and finally take that step. But I think, looking back, it was a wise and wonderful experiment that we haven't had other states follow, but nevertheless I am proud of this state taking that action. I don't think you have to look at our action as being one that is a domino that leads to other states following us. In fact, it wouldn't bother me at all if the only two states in the nation that took this step were Maine and Nebraska. As Maine goes, may not be the case as so goes the nation. Certainly as Nebraska goes I don't think in the terms of the Unicameral the nation has followed along. So I don't think you have to buy the argument that if we take this step everybody else will take this step. At the same time, you have to keep in mind that is this, in fact, the direction we want to take? I think it is. I think the concept...and I don't look at this as a partisan issue, I see it as a...I got that material from Senator Wehrbein about the fact that this was a Republican idea at one time. Hey, that's great. I'm fine. I think that's wonderful and I'd be happy if it was a Republican idea again. Because the concept of trying to allow individuals to have more competition in the presidential race, thus, and generate more public interest in participation in the process and the election is what I ultimately see as the benefit of this bill. I don't think particularly it will end up having much of a dramatic impact in any elections in terms of how the votes go down. I just don't see that happening. We have such a small state, I can't see where a vote here or a vote there will ultimately make that much of a difference but, nevertheless, you would have the chance for local individuals to get energized about the race with the possibility of winning a congressional district for their candidate, be they a Republican or a Democrat, where on a statewide level you just can't get that activity. What's happened to our presidential race is they have become media events with millions of dollars being spent for advertising on a national basis and I've been involved in these races and I've seen next to no local grass roots effort developing and next to no energy level being uplifted as a result. You don't have that sense of participation in presidential races that I think were once the case either in the primaries or in the general