

wish to speak on the advancement?

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, thank you. I would oppose advancement of the bill and suggest that maybe this body may likewise want to vote against advancement. That last vote on the Withem amendment was really unfortunate. This is supposed to be a nonpartisan body, although we all realize that on certain votes there is a certain amount of partisanship. The Schimek plan was clearly one that was pro-Democratic in terms of its impact. The Conway plan is pro-Republican. It is, in my view, a pure partisan attempt to try to gerrymander the First District to make it as Republican as possible and to diminish the influence of Lincoln as much as possible for the joint impact of successfully retaining the seat for the Republican Party in the future. It's purely a partisan issue in my view and Senator Withem was trying to bring back a balance between the two. It wasn't the Schimek plan, which was very pro-Democrat, and it wasn't the Conway plan which was very pro-Republican. It was a split down the middle that held the differential the same as it has been in the past, about 20,000 more Republicans than Democrats. It also attempted to give a little more legitimacy to the geographic boundaries so that areas of interest are retained; that Lincoln isn't cut out from a surrounding area like Saline County and lower Gage County. It did not cross county lines. It was, I think, a reasonable compromise, not what I would ultimately want. I was very favorable to the Schimek plan. Others, likewise, had less than they hoped for in that but, nevertheless, in my view that last vote was a pure partisan vote and we know where the numbers are on that basis here in the body. Well there, in my view, ought to be a veto of this legislation and I'll be, if this bill advances, asking the Governor to do just that. We ought not to let pure partisan redistricting occur in this state. It happens elsewhere and, in those bodies, they have partisan legislatures. They're very partisan states. I thought this state was different. I thought our Legislature was different. I thought we tried to try and balance out the various interests and do things in a way that were a little more constructive than what's being proposed under the Conway plan. I think that the better course is not to advance the bill. There are other ideas out there. Senator Schimek has some. I have had some others brought to me that look intriguing that are much different than the current make up of districts. If we're not willing to be reasonable, it appears to me that there is little recourse other than to have a veto at the end of the line and I would expect that that would occur.