

January 14, 1992

CLERK: Madam President, Senator Hartnett, I understand you're going to withdraw the proposal you submitted earlier. Madam President, Senators Beutler and Robinson would move to amend.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Madam President and members of the Legislature, we're now down to the traditional four-district caucus that we have had in this body since 1973 and let me say, in opening, that this proposition may not be agreeable to everybody. It's being passed out to you, by the way, it should be on your desk in one second. It may not be agreeable to absolutely everybody, it never...these things never are, as you know, and this proposition seeks to keep in place the four-district structure and it represents, as best I can tell, not from surveying everybody but from a somewhat broad cross-section of people, a consensus on how the four-district proposition can be perpetuated with the principle of minimal change, minimal change, but, again, I think all of us retain a degree of flexibility with regard to the changes that can be made within a four-district system. Nothing is inviolate. I'm sure there will be people who will suggest slightly different changes to the four-district system and I think we should listen carefully to those people. But, going back to the specific proposition before you, here is what it does. The easiest one to understand, of course, is the Omaha district, the second district, because there are absolutely no changes in the second district. That district remains unaffected. The changes, basically, take place...mostly take place in the first district which is Lincoln and the southeast area of the state. Because of the compression of population, that particular district is taking in the two new districts, District 21 and District 39. District 21, you may recall, is the district that bridges...the new district that bridges Lincoln and Omaha. So District number 1 is taking that in and by that means geographically moving closer towards Omaha. And also District 39, you may recall, is primarily an Omaha suburb, and so, once again, because of the population changes, the 1st District is absorbing the excess, the senators who cannot be retained in the Omaha district. So we take the two new districts because that seems to be logical, but the consequence of that is that we need to lose two people in order to retain basically the same number of people in the 1st District. And so the two that we lose are the westernmost, southernmost senators in the 1st District, Senator