

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I rise to oppose the committee amendments. What this bill does, it moves District 19 from extreme northeast Nebraska down into Madison County. And it also puts the two successful candidates that ran in the District 19 primary, it puts them into an even district. So what we are doing, we're taking the election process and destroying that, because at the present time these two successful candidates, out of a field of seven, have these certificates of election in their hands. Do we want to do that? I don't think we do, because the election...the elections are a sacred process, not only to the candidates, but also to the voters. The other day when we had a hearing, I believe there was over 60 people down from northeast Nebraska, from District 19, and they were concerned that their vote would be negated if we do this. And so this is why...one of the reasons I'm opposing it. Also, in our State Constitution, Article I, Section 22 says, all elections shall be free, and there shall be no hindrance or impediment to the right of a qualified voter to exercise the elective franchise. In talking to these two successful candidates, if a plan like this becomes law, I'm sure that they'll be filing a lawsuit on that, saying that we intervened with the election process. I certainly don't think we ought to do that. And so it's for this reason that I oppose the committee amendments. Also, later I'll be probably offering an amendment that will put LB 10, this is a bill that Senator Johnson and I introduced, and it would put an even district into Madison County. And so I know that we have a lot of problems here, but I guess I would just rather see us do nothing at the present time. And then after the election redistrict the whole state, which I feel would be certainly more fair to everybody. At the present time there's three or four, maybe five hot spots in the state concerning the redistricting plan that we adopted last session. So maybe we ought to take a little more time, do a little more research, get more input from the citizens of Nebraska, and then go ahead with a redistricting plan after the election. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Hefner. Senator Dierks, you're next.

SENATOR DIERKS: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I'm, of course, supporting the committee amendments. If you were present at the hearing, you saw a bill that I introduced, LB 11, that the boundaries of that particular plan pretty well