

Special guests today of Senator Byars are his brother and sister-in-law, Ron and Susan Byars, of Lexington, Kentucky. Welcome to the Chambers, and welcome to Nebraska. Thank you. Next item on the agenda is in Final Reading, LB 7. Would the senators please return to their seats so that we can proceed. Would the senators please be seated. Mr. Clerk, please proceed.

CLERK: Madam President, Senator Hefner would move to return LB 7 to Select File for specific amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Hefner.

SENATOR HEFNER: Madam President and members of the body, I have a motion here to return the bill because I believe that we need a little more discussion on this redistricting bill. Some senators were not here the other day, and this will give them an opportunity to talk on the issue, if they'd care to. But LB 7, as now amended, I feel, destroys our sacred election process. And I don't think it's fair for the Legislature to legislate this and change this, because in the primary election, in District 19, we had 2 successful candidates out of a field of 7 that were the 2 top vote-getters. At the present time they hold these certificates of election. And so I feel that they are entitled to finish the election. If we pass this bill, why we're telling these two candidates, just toss those two certificates out of the window, forget about it, and I don't think that's fair. I feel it's a terrible injustice to these 2 candidates, and not only to just these 2 candidates, but to the over 9,000 voters in District 19, 9,000 voters that went to the primary and cast their ballots. Now we're saying it doesn't count. If this bill passed with the emergency clause, why it would go into effect right away. And I predict that there will be a lawsuit, either filed by the two candidates or by these voters that I just talked about. I feel they have a real good case. In our state Constitution it says that there shall not be any hindrance in our election process. Also, if you study the federal Constitution, I believe, that they are protected there, too. The redistricting process that we're in now is a terrible mess. We still have other hot spots across the state. So, I feel that there will be some other lawsuits that will surface. But I just feel we need to let the election process go forward, and then after the election, why come back and redistrict the whole state and do the job right this time. I just feel that passing this bill would be a blatant disregard for our sacred election process. And that's about all I have to say. If