

quite fathomed, this is viewed as a partisan issue. I think last year Senator Kristensen's bill was up and every Republican, save one, supported it; every Democrat, save one, opposed it. And the votes tended to break down exclusively on partisan grounds. And I haven't really understood how anybody gets an advantage with this proposal. I think what Senator Schimek has done for the state, by offering this bill two or three years ago, whenever it was, is to demonstrate to the rest of the nation that Nebraska is not afraid to take a critical look at some of our longstanding institutions, particularly longstanding institutions that really don't make a lot of sense in this day and age. The electoral college was established back in the days when we were working as hard as we could, as a nation, to create a new form of government that added more say by the people, but was not set up as a direct democracy. During the time when the electoral college was set up, for instance, people did not vote for their U.S. Senators. State legislators voted for their U.S. Senators. We did not have full popular vote, women were not voting, only landowners were voting. And the idea was to protect this nation against the unruly mobs, I think was the term that was used in those days. Since that time, we have progressed to the time where we believe more and more indirect democracy. One of the ironies, I guess, is that yesterday, when the Government Committee held lengthy hearings on measures to promote more direct democracy, through the petition process, we're now here on the floor working toward considering a bill that would reinstitutionalize the preexisting system that is designed to keep the popular view from moving forward. Is Senator Schimek's proposal to change Nebraska government likely to revolutionize the electoral college? No, it's only 5 of the 535 electoral votes in the nation. We're in a state that typically, in presidential elections, is a one-party state, has largely been throughout our history, probably will continue to be. I think the statistics we showed last year, that of the...over the last 60 years, had this provision been in effect there may have been two occasions when a single electoral vote would have been cast differently under this provision than it was under the preexisting provision. One time during one of the Roosevelt eras the state went Republican, but the second congressional district went for the democratic candidate, President Roosevelt. That year we would have had one additional vote...electoral vote for Roosevelt, the rest of them would have gone for whoever the Republican candidate may have been that year. And ironically the 1964 election, it was the first election that I followed as a new student,...