

Senator Abboud.

SENATOR ABOUD: Madam President, and colleagues, I rise in opposition to the amendment. I feel that we've had a chance to examine whether or not this process has worked. We did go through a presidential election cycle and the people did have a chance to review it. And though it isn't quite as exciting as some of the issues that we've been involved with down here, and it may not attract the same amount of attention of our constituents that other issues do, my feel was that my constituents felt that it was a system that does not work. I feel that with our three congressional districts, equally divided by population, that each of the three has a say in our presidential process, and the issue we should be addressing is how Nebraska has an impact on the election of our President. And though five electoral votes may not be much in comparison to the State of California or the State of New York, or Pennsylvania, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, we still have a larger say in the process by keeping a unification of five votes versus breaking it down by one or two for a particular presidential candidate. Now I think that you really have to look at the purpose of the bill when it was originally enacted, and the purpose of it is to provide a greater say or a say in the presidential process, a greater say than what we currently had or what we had prior to the '92 election. And my belief is that if you want to have a greater say in the presidential process that you focus it on the primary. The State of Iowa has a disproportional say, I feel, in who our presidential candidates should be, and the same with New Hampshire. Their population base in comparison to larger population centers of this country is much less, but they do have a disproportional say because of their early primary process, and that is what we should focus in on. Maybe what we should do is have it immediately the week following the New Hampshire primary. Maybe that's a prospective. Maybe we should have it as close to that New Hampshire primary as possible, as other states are looking to do. That's the approach that we should take so we can have more of a say in who our nominees should be. I feel that this bill, by repealing the current statute, it would be a step forward because it would be a further empowerment of Nebraska and it would reduce the dilution that we see by having a possibility that our electoral votes could be split. I would urge the body to reject the Senator Bernard-Stevens amendment and advance the bill on to Final Reading. Thank you.