

February 28, 1995 LB 65

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Abboud. Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, and members of the Legislature. Of course, I...Senator Schimek struck my interest with that last speech. That's exactly the reason I brought the bill, Senator Schimek. Nothing happened, thank goodness, nothing happened and the risk, the risk is avoided for one more year. Obviously, this is an intellectual debate that has mired itself down into a political skirmish at this point in time, but I do seriously believe that as you begin to examine these issues, how long do you want Nebraska to be placed at risk. And Senator Bernard-Stevens, I might, look, if we'd go and give you one more election, I might we be willing to do that saying to the voters, look, we are going to have a political election for President here in two years. Obviously, that may be too short a period of time to change it, and I'd be willing to say, look, we can go through the next presidential election with the system we have, but, after that, of course, the system would go away. I am uncomfortable about going anything more than the next presidential election because I don't think, intellectually, it makes any sense to do that. You either agree with the policy or you don't. And so I would offer that to you, Senator Bernard-Stevens, as probably at least a place that I'm comfortable, I don't know about the rest of the members of the Legislature, but at this point in time, I certainly cannot support the Bernard-Stevens' amendment as it sets, and, of course, we also look at what sorts of thing may happen. And the problem that I have with the Electoral College is that as politics becomes more centered around the thirty second spot, it becomes a matter of who can make who feel good instead of complete examination of the issues; that we become increasingly at risk for someone to come into the State of Nebraska, flood it with a bunch of feel-good things, tell them how great they really are, and then, of course, two years later when we find out what sort of people were involved in that effort, we really regret the fact that Nebraska was taken advantage of, and that we became the forum for those people who espoused their ideas. And, of course, for some that may be the seed of new democracy, for the others it is going to be a black eye that gets put on our state, and I'm just real uncomfortable with doing that. So to limit our exposure, I certainly would ask the body to reject the Bernard-Stevens amendment and, Senator Bernard Stevens, if you would consider it, I would see how the rest of the body feels, but I may well go for this next election, allowing it