

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...we're not prohibiting paid circulators, but what we would be doing under this bill as amended, we would be giving strong preference to volunteer petition drives and I predict that if it works, that there will be a number of other states who will be looking at it because every other state in the nation is trying to grapple with trying to give people the right to petition but allaying fears about people coming into this state and buying issues, if you will, on the ballot. And so with that I would just encourage adoption of the committee amendments.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Schimek. Senator Witek.

SENATOR WITEK: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, it was interesting to hear Senator Hall's comments on why he was voting for the committee amendments. I have some of his quotes from when LR 24CA went through and he said it was not the intent to change the number of signatures required nor the method of computation of the number of signatures required. So if it wasn't anybody's intent and then the court decided that it should change, then why doesn't everybody here who are claiming it wasn't their intent put it back the way it was and then if you want to go off on all these tangents of, you know, we don't want paid circulators to have the same and you know we've discussed this for hours and hours and hours in the Government Committee. Finally after listening to it for hours I said to one of the testifiers, if individuals are so upset, if their true focus is on the paid circulators which, I'm sorry, but I find that suspect, but if their true focus is on the paid circulators and being...having to punish people who use paid circulators or somehow, you know, have peop...and by the way, the people who circulate these petitions, the unpaid circulators came in volume, in numbers to say don't do the two-tier system to them. It's kind of like killing chem with your kindness here. You're trying to fix a problem that they don't perceive that they have, that they just want their petition process back. But I said to them finally, okay, if you're going to be upset with paid circulators, then let's be upset with paid senators. Let's say that if I say that I don't want to take any money from any other source outside of friends and family, et cetera, from any organized force, organized PAC or any organization, then I'm going to get for every vote I get at the election, two votes for every one vote I get because that's what you're saying here, that these people have to be charged more or given more,