

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what to say after that last comments, but let me...Senator Hall would like some of my time but I'm going to give him a couple of minutes to cool down and all I want to say is that this idea of a surprise on the petition drives of two years ago, I should say 1994, shouldn't have been a surprise because in 1993 I had a bill, LB 776, and I predicted that this would happen. I thought it might happen. We knew there was a conflict in the constitution. I had a bill that would have clarified the situation. It was rejected by the different supporters of petition drives. They wanted to take their chances, they took their chances, they lost. I feel it was unfortunate, but I also want to indicate that those who feel sorry or badly about the fact that those petition drives in 1994 got done wrong by the court ought to also know that everybody involved in those that was of a leadership position knew that this issue was up because it had been raised a year before in the Legislature with LB 776. And so there weren't that many surprises and I'm not trying to say you shouldn't be concerned and be supportive. I know Senator Dierks is trying to return back and feels that rules were changed and all that. I agree that that's a legitimate position. But I also want to note that when you have the concern and sympathy that the rules got changed in the middle of the game, those rules were in question and under consideration a full year before the court ever took any action. It was clearly a problem, we could have dealt with it two years ago, we didn't because the very people that are now coming back to us asking for this legislation rejected the legislation two years ago that would have clarified the situation. So I just want to make that point and I'll yield the rest of my time to Senator Hall.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Hall, you have about three minutes.

SENATOR HALL: Mr. President, where do I...

SPEAKER WITHEM: You have three minutes and then you will be the next speaker.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you very much. Mr. President and members, again I rise in support of the committee amendments but let me clarify my position on them. I don't necessarily think that they're the greatest thing since sliced bread. There are