

more likely in the event that the courts find that the two-tier system is unacceptable. I think it will also create a situation where under declaratory judgment action statutes of the State of Nebraska they will be able to get that determination on the two-tier system before it goes into effect. I really believe they will be able to do that. And that will have the benefit then of not clouding any one group's particular effort, not messing up any particular effort, but rather letting things flow smoothly, letting the interpretation come down smoothly and hopefully be done with it by the time January 1, 1999 comes around which is when the two-tier system would go into effect under this amendment. Hopefully be done with all the legal uncertainty before that point in time and continue on smoothly from that point in time either with the two-tier system, if the courts have said okay, or with the law that we had indicated to people we would restore in the event they say that it's not okay. If at some point in time then we want to raise again the question of signatures or changes in the petition laws, my mind is open to that, but I don't think it should be done in the context of a Supreme Court action that took away from people a right they thought they had in terms of the number of signatures required. And I think anyone in good faith in this body would have to say that we were surprised by that decision too, that we did not intend that decision and that we are making use of this opportunity to try to deal with the question of...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...of paid petitioners. Well, fine, let's do make use of this opportunity to deal with paid petitioners, but let's not do it at the expense of our credibility with the public out there. I think our first obligation is to restore things to the way they were. And our second obligation is to try to deal with the volunteer versus paid petitioner problem and I think if we do those things in the order suggested in this amendment that the public will understand that and will go along with that and that that can work out well both for our credibility and for getting a decision on the actual question. I don't think that we're doing any sort of disservice. There was the suggestion of disservice but I think this is a service to the public and certainly with regard to those groups who are involved in petitions, they don't consider this...

SPEAKER WITHEM: Time.