

originally crafted, put the base on registered voters. And I happen to feel that that's a much better base, a much more consistent base, one that's more reflective of people who are interested in the political process rather than those who vote in any one given election. But...but, having said that, at least for now I am going to vote against the amendment because naturally it will raise...it will raise the numbers, and I have tried and done my best to keep the numbers stable on this. I know there are a lot of people who want them raised higher, but I think that we have a situation now where we have both systems with the numbers where they were before, and I'm going to continue to support that until and unless some other kind of change is made in this bill. And, you know, I know there's going to probably be a reconsideration of the Beutler amendment later on today, and if there is, and if it's successful, and if it's adopted then I'm going to come back and look at all of these other kinds of signature proposals. I'll look at Senator Wesely's again, I'll look at Senator Bohlke's, because then once we've done that I think that we've opened the door. I think that there will be people on this floor who won't be able to support the bill. I think the whole thing is going to break down. And I would caution you that we have a bill that I think people can live with now, and if we start tacking on the amendments there are people with really divergent views on this bill, and they're going to fall off. And so having said all of that, I'd simply urge you not to vote for the amendment at least at this time.

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

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members. I understand what Senator Dierks and Senator Schimek are saying, they want a pure return, basically, to what had been before, with the exception of that bifurcated system. But let me again make the point, what is the argument to having an open-ended, "untime" limited ability to initiate petitions? What you have is lingering petitions that are around forever, as we know some of those cases are. When we had a case of less than a year ago, in one month they were able to get the signatures of over 100,000 individuals to meet the higher standard of signatures that were required under the court decision for term limits, they did that in a month at the higher level. So I'm suggesting that at the very least if we're going to lower the level of signatures there ought to be some time limit put on it so that we don't have this thing going on forever. There ought to be some restriction on