

point in time saying that, you know, we understand that there's obviously been an increase and that for these smaller newspapers to exist they're going to need that. In effect, what you'll see in the amendment is the phase-in. You'll see this conversion table put in there. What they do is put the price towards a standard set of type and then if your newspaper has larger or smaller columns or width, that conversion table helps to convert that standard price to every newspaper in the state. That's the reason you see a conversion table. It does take out the ability to negotiate so that a newspaper can't just say, no, sorry, we're not going to do that, and force you to negotiate. That added the great comfort level to allow the opposition to go away from the political subdivisions and this is one of those things that if you're going to continue to have newspapers, we started off with 304 of them some 30 years ago, today...

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Time.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: ..we're down to less than 195.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senators Kristensen and Maurstad. Senator Kristensen, your light is next.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens, and I do want to just leave off and then I will allow time for some discussion, but certainly the number of newspapers in this state, and we're talking about primarily the newspapers in the rest of the State of Nebraska, the smaller newspapers, as those costs dramatically for newsprint and ink go up, as they have in the last years, we're going to continue to have a larger problem with lots of newspapers. And this is not making fundamental changes in the way we do business, but, quite frankly, legal notices are important to the people who read. It's important. It's a price of doing business in government. Now this doesn't necessarily deal with the... all the ballot issues. Those things obviously are done through a separate contract and done on a one-time basis, so they are a little different than this. We're talking about your basic legal notices and these are, oh, such things as the notice of board meetings, notices of incorporations and, again, those are things that individuals would pay and not necessarily the political subdivisions, the public school legal notices and those sorts of things, minutes of meetings, notices of meetings, applications for liquor licenses and so on. And this... this bill doesn't do anything with the numbers of times. It does deal strictly with an