

January 30, 1996 LR 41

understand better the function of their government.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Brown. Senator Maurstad.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Call the question.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Question's been called. Do I see five hands? I see five hands. The question before you is, shall debate cease? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Please record.

CLERK: 26 ayes, 0 nays to cease debate.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Debate ceases. The Chair recognizes Senator Brown to close on LR 41CA.

SENATOR BROWN: We've had a lot of discussion, some of it I don't believe necessarily directly to the substance of my amendment, constitutional amendment. Senator Beutler talked about that we were striking whole sections. Some of the reports that were talked about are not stricken. The reference to the Public Service Commission as being the only entity that can receive those reports is being stricken. I think the most important thing that I would have liked to have more discussion about is why...why this should be different than any other agency that has any regulatory power, why it should be constitutionally protected, and why we can't trust that our statutes, which gives the specifics of the way that the agency functions in the same way that our statutes give the specifics of the way any agency functions, are insufficient to do that. I would really have like to have heard people argue a little bit more with the substance of the editorial from the Lincoln Journal-Star, with the substance of the editorial from the Omaha World-Herald, with the 1960 Program Evaluation. What, the question is not what is going to happen. The question is, what justifies constitutional protection for this agency that is totally different than the way any other agency operates? I will admit that this is a small step. It is a little thing, but people are looking at us to see what we're going to do. We're dealing with property taxes, and there are people out there that say we need to do big things; we need to do 400 million dollar things. And we're saying, and rightly so, I believe, trust us, we'll do a whole series of small things and it will add up to a big thing. And this is one of those small things. It is just