

February 1, 1996 LB 964

don't know that fraud, in this instance, would always be readily observable. It's the kind that I think would happen when somebody picks up somebody else's ballot that comes to their address and...and mails it in for them. And, of course, you have to be very careful about the signatures on the ballot in this kind of a case. And if people weren't careful, maybe there could be some fraud. But at least I know that, that Oregon has had a lot of experience with it at the local level, in one county in particular in Oregon, for many years and they've never had a problem with it to the best of my knowledge. So I...I really think that it could, it really could save us some money, plus I want to read you just a little paragraph from the Center For Policy Alternatives, which has an election section in it. It says, in every use of mail balloting, voter turnout has increased while cost per ballot has significantly decreased. The city of San Diego conducted a special election by mail at a total cost of \$328,000 compared to an estimated average of \$550,000 for a conventional special election. The turnout, 60.8 percent of registered voters, was the highest for any special election in San Diego County. And I think that you all know that special elections are particularly difficult for turning people out, and especially the real low level elections. So I would like to...I would like to support this bill even though I have to confess to you,...

SPEAKER WITHEM PRESIDING

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...because we were helping Connie Day say good-bye last night I didn't get the bill thoroughly looked at, and I may have some questions later about specifics of the bill. But I would encourage you all to vote for this. I think...Senator Cudaback, I would imagine it's local option, that each county can decide for itself whether it wishes to hold a mail-in ballot election or not. So I think that would be positive. It's not mandatory for counties to do, and they have the option of doing it. I know right here in Lancaster County that there's a lot of interest in doing this kind of thing and I think it will be very positive. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Hartnett followed by Senators Beutler, Janssen, Vrtiska, Robinson, Maurstad, and Wehrbein.