

February 27, 1996 LR 45

cannot be done now, under the constitution. With this, you are giving the affirmative power to a person to appoint all the county board members. And you can say, if you want to, that people will vote on this, they'll vote on that, they'll go this way rather than that way. We just got through, not too long ago, making the determination, as a Legislature, that a certain issue ought not be put to the public, because we knew that the monied interests, talking about expanded gambling, by the way, casino type gambling, the monied interests would be able to come in and buy that election. If an election can be bought at the state level, it can be bought at the county level also. Or let's say you don't have a situation where this administrator is going to be authorized to appoint the county board members, but you have an uneven number on the county board, as in Douglas County, seven. You get four who have one particular bent, those four hire the county administrator. The county administrator proceeds to appoint people to these positions who fit that particular agenda. Right now those who are making inroads and fighting hard are the so-called Christian right, or whatever they call themselves. Four of them get on the county board, they hire Reverend Pat Pat Robertson, or whatever his name is, and he appoints all of the people in his church to everyone of these other positions, and that's authorized...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...under the constitution, it's allowed under the law, and I think that is a terribly unwise decision for the Legislature to take. My amendment, I say again, if the rest of you want this poison, you can have it, but don't force it on the county in which I live. Senator Janssen, I'm not prepared to have to fight against the creation of a king or a queen who is going to make all these appointments. I want to head it off now because I have other things that I know I'm going to have to contend with, this does not have to be one of them. And accepting out the largest county in the state, largest in terms of population, is not unusual, not unheard of, and under the circumstances of what this is designed to do, this LR 46CA, or makes possible to be done, a wise position is to remove Douglas County. That's what we're discussing now, and I hope you will vote in the affirmative...

SPEAKER WITHEM: Time.