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Transcriber's Office

April 13, 1999 LB 729

SENATOR SCHIMEX: Yes, thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. The amendment provides for a process that will facilitate getting into court for a review of the legal sufficiency of an initiative or referendum. It is procedural in nature and should not be any controversy surrounding it. How this works is, if the Secretary of State refuses to accept for filing any initiative or referendum based on legal sufficiency, any resident may apply, within ten days, to the district court of Lancaster County for a writ of mandamus. If the court decides that the petition complies with the standards of the bill, the Secretary of State shall accept the petition for filing. The same procedure applies when the Secretary of State accept...accepts the petition for filing. In such an instance, the person who is the sponsor of record is the party in the suit. If the court decides that the petition violates the requirements of this act, the court shall enter an order enjoining the Secretary of State from processing the petition. Either party may appeal to the Court of Appeals within ten days after a decision is rendered. The amendment also provides that these actions will be advanced on the court docket. The amendment also deletes conflict with the Constitution of Nebraska as one of the tests for legal sufficiency. Any constitutional amendment proposed could potentially be in conflict with the current provisions of the constitution and the committee wished to remove that provision. In closing, there already is a procedure in place for challenging the Secretary of State's decision to put an issue on the ballot. This might be for issues such as fraud, the insufficiency of the number of required signatures, and other election law requirements. And, finally, I am having passed out a couple of handouts that I wish to call your attention to. First of all is a bit of research done by LRD, which gives you some totals on the amounts spent on initiatives in 1996 and in 1998, and you will notice that in 1996 there were three ballot initiatives. There was one unsuccessful...well, there were several unsuccessful initiatives. Totally, for all of those initiatives, almost \$3 million was spent. In 1998, the ante went up considerably. Two initiatives, the 412 and 413, spent almost \$13 million apiece or together. There was an unsuccessful initiative on term limits that spent \$25,000, but a total of over \$13 million spent. We're talking about a lot of money being involved here and that