

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

April 13, 1999 LB 729

is what the amendment and the bill is trying to address; the fact that it seems like there should be a test before something goes to the ballot. The other thing of it is the public becomes very disillusioned and upset when they have passed something on the ballot and then the court says, oops, sorry, can't do that, it's unconstitutional. The second handout that I've given you is the summary of the initiative and referendum petition dates, which gives you some idea of some of the steps that take place. One of the things, I don't...I'm not sure that's on here, is that...is that a petition drive can start almost two years before an actual election. So you have to file the petition with the Secretary of State at that time, whenever you want to start your petition drive, and that's when this bill and this amendment kick in. If there are any questions, I'd be happy to try to address them.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Senator Schimek. To speak to the committee amendments, Senator Quandahl, please.

SENATOR QUANDAHL: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I thought I'd get up and rise and maybe explain why I voted against this as far as getting out of the committee, and I think Senator Schimek probably expected me to do this, and I'd go back to about the second day when I was...when I was here. I was rummaging through my desk drawer and I happened to come across this black book with my name on it, and in there, there are two different pamphlets and one of them is the rules of this body and the other one is the Constitution of the State of Nebraska. And if you look at the constitution, particularly where I was drawn is Article II, distribution of powers. The powers of the government of this state are divided into three distinct departments, the legislative, executive and judicial, and no person or collection of persons, being one of those departments, shall exercise any power properly belonging to either of the others, except as hereinafter expressly directed or permitted. Well, what this bill does, at least the way that I see it, is granting to the Secretary of State a power that is reserved to the judicial branch, and so by my mind, I think the entire bill and the committee amendment have some constitutional problems with itself. And just because it does look to me like it may violate the separation of powers, and I'm sure that's something that the judicial branch would not look kindly on.