

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

May 24, 1999

LR 18

constitutional process? Is the greater hazard from carefully considered and debated proposals that are presented by the Legislature? Do we have a better chance of knowing that those do what we want them to, that they represent a good poli...that they represent a policy choice for the people of the state of Nebraska to make, or is the greater risk in the initiative process that we hardly have any means to participate in, other than signing a petition and then ultimately voting at the ballot box? I think the initiative process is a valuable one for our state, but I don't think it's any better than the process that we undertake here, and I don't think we need to fear our process anymore than we fear that process, if we fear either one of them.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. (Visitors introduced.) Further discussion on the motion to advance LR 18CA to E & R? Senator Jones.

SENATOR JONES: Mr. President and members of the body, I'm going to stand and oppose this constitutional amendment change. I don't know, I'd like to see it get back like it used to be at 58,000 at last...used to be 10 percent over the gubernatorial election. Right now you got to have 10 percent over the registered voters, and that puts it up over 100,000, and that's really tough. I'd like to see it go back there and then have a voluntary petition drive, in place of a paid petition drive, but when it's over 100,000 and there's only 1.6 million in this state, they're just about impossible to get something on the...on the ballot with that many signatures needed. And I guess what really concerns me about this, if we had something that was really contested and it just barely won on the first election, and 51 percent for a good example, how many millions of dollars would be spent between the next 6 months or 18 months, however it would fall, before the next election? I guess that's my main concern with having two, because I think that really puts a lot of expense and money spent you might say twice. And so I guess that's one of my main concerns that I'm going to vote against it. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Jones. Senator Chambers.