

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

January 13, 2003

districts. Was that taken into consideration, or was that ever a part of the discussion?

SENATOR PEUTLER: Senator, that was a part of the discussion and I can't describe for you the feelings of all the members of the committee. I don't know how they all felt about it. I think there was some diversity of opinion. But, first of all, you can't divide us evenly three ways, for openers, so you can't parallel the congressional districts in any event. Secondly, at least some people, including myself, felt that the congressional representation doesn't make any sense for Lincoln and the surrounding area, because if there's anything that unifies...is unifying in these geographic areas it's the trade area of Lincoln and adjoining areas, and the trade area of Omaha and adjoining areas, and then, for example, somebody in Richardson County has almost no relationship with somebody north in Dixon or Sioux City, whereas they would come to trade, for example, to Lincoln. So it was where people worked with each other in a commercial, economic sense, and we were trying...just because congressional lines are a certain way, I would defy anybody to describe why the congressional lines are the way they are. They make less sense to me, certainly much less sense to me, than what the committee has done in this instance.

SENATOR QUANDAHL: I guess, from my standpoint, and I wasn't involved on the Redistricting Committee but I was involved in some of the floor debate when we did discuss the congressional districts last year, and there was a considerable amount of debate when we came up with those lines and it wasn't an easy thing to do, but the one thing that I recall being the most, I guess, most strenuous and the argument that ultimately carried the day was that the congressional lines came down to communities of interest; that those people that had a similar community of interest basically were lumped into the same congressional district, and that's how we came up with the congressional district lines. And if I hear what you're saying here today, it sounds like we're talking about the same things. We're talking about communities of interest. And just so, it raises a question in my mind. If the communities of interest were good enough for the congressional districts last year, my question to the Rules Committee, to anybody who cares to