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FLOOR DEBATE

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of any sort of one community. I never understood what Richardson County had to do with Sioux City or Dixon County. It always had more to do with the area of the southeastern part of the state, south of the Platte and along the Platte. Furthermore, if you're looking for a second objective thread by which to link things, it still wouldn't be the congressional district structure; it would be the I-80 Interstate structure. As we go into the future, the communities along I-80 and the Platte River are going to have much more in common than any...than other areas of the state. That's going to be a commonality of interest. Omaha will be one, the I-80 corridor is going to be the second one, and the rest of the state would be the third. So I think the congressional district breakdown is actually the least logical of the three that have just been discussed. And I want to put that on the record.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Brown, this would be your third time on this particular amendment.

SENATOR BROWN: Mr. President, members, I'm sorry that Senator Beutler misunderstood me. I was not referring to the proposal that was before us, but to the previous structure, and how we arrived at the previous...the structure that we are currently existing under. And my reason for supporting a congressional line designation...because I do not disagree with some of the communities of interest arguments that Senator Beutler has made...is that that piece was something that we engaged the public in. It is something that is out there with the public. It was a hard-fought distinction for the public. And we had people from different parts of the state that had strong feelings about that. And there were people who are members of this body who argued for the areas they represented to be in one certain congressional district, and now want to be in a different district in terms of their caucus representation. And so I'm just saying that we have gone out to the public, taken public input, engaged the public in drawing those lines. It was not an easy task. It didn't always represent what we might consider the best communities of interest, but it's something that we arrived at. And now, if we are trying to determine something that we can objectively explain to individuals, I believe that that is something we can objectively explain.