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FLOOR DEBATE

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municipal hospital, a medical clinic, a nursing home, or some form of multiunit housing. Now, if we could find 4,999 citizens in this second-class city that wanted to serve on this board, I'd say this is democracy in action, and I would be thrilled to have this many people voting on the issues that affect these facilities in their city. But if you want to just raise it incrementally, you might even consider nine, because I guarantee that they will be back here within a year or two, saying, you know, we have some really involved citizens in our community, and they would like to be involved in this board, and so could you raise it to nine. So you might want to consider, with your amendment, raising it more than seven. Thank you.

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN: Thank you, Senator Redfield. Senator Mines.

SENATOR MINES: Mr. President, members of the body, having served in a municipality, it's a basic premise that citizens at the local level make decisions best for themselves. And when we as a body presume that we know the correct number, whether it be 5, 7, 9, or 599, I think it boils down to a matter of local issues, local control. And in fact, if a local city wants to empower a board of 27 people, more power to them. I just don't know where we feel that we know the correct number and can devise what's right for a city, when in fact we don't...each city is different. We have over 500 municipalities in this state, and most of those are under the population of 5,000. So I would urge the bill to...I support the bill as written and would urge the body to pass this. Thank you.

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN: Thank you, Senator Mines. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, Senator Mines is not in a small town now. And what Senator Mines needs to understand, from my position, is that I'm a state senator, and the Legislature creates cities, Senator Mines. They do not have an independent existence, and they do what we tell them to do. It is our responsibility, under the constitution, to legislate for them. And our judgment is to be exercised as state senators, not trying to give each little