

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

May 7, 2003

LB 598

people voted for term limits in Nebraska to get rid of Senator Chambers. I don't think that's much of a secret. However, if, as the court has ruled, all of our names can be kept off the ballot, Senator Chambers' name could be kept off the ballot as well. However, that would comply with term limits. But if Senator Chambers chose to run a write-in campaign, his name wouldn't be on the ballot. Legally, it meets the term limits requirement. But since he's already run one successful write-in candidacy and gotten elected to this body, he simply runs a write-in campaign, is duly elected by the people in his district, and the courts have ruled that as a duly elected representative he would have to be seated. The voters could end up with eliminating every single senator here except Senator Chambers, who they may really have wanted to have gotten rid of. Food for thought. A little irony. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Preister. Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I rise with an opinion that might differ a bit from others. But I do want to explain my discomfort for...or discomfort with voting green on this. I signed on to Senator Schrock's proposal to modify term limits to 12 years from eight years, with the notion that that is still with the spirit of the voters from that ballot measure prior. And I don't necessarily like the outcome of that ballot measure. But it's something that the voters have spoken on. And that's why I'm very uncomfortable immediately trying to reverse what the voters placed on the ballot and ultimately approved. And I think that we can manage within the confines with Senator Schrock's proposal, or at least the study, as LB 598 started out. So I'm not here to say that term limits is the answer to everything, by any means. That is not what I'm saying. I'm simply explaining why I cannot support the advancement of this measure. Because if you look at it, I mean, term limits I think can be very damaging. But the term limit concept we could mitigate a bit with Senator Schrock's proposal of changing to 12 years, which I think would certainly sell better among the public, and bring...and try to minimize the damage that term limits could provoke. Thank you, Mr. President.