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public officials and employees are not prohibited from campaigning for or against a ballot question or election of a candidate unless public resources are used. I...the bill advanced on a seven yes to nothing vote. There was one person absent. And I would highly recommend the amendment. I would like to give the rest of my time, if I might, to Senator Mines, who would like to maybe discuss a little bit what his role in all of this was.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Mines.

SENATOR MINES: Thank you, Mr. President and colleagues. My role was minimal. The underlying bill was discussed in committee and had universal approval. I merely suggested that if we're looking...if the bill was looking at permitting the senators from participating in the process, a campaign process, whether it's for an initiative or a candidate, that same privilege and same responsibility should be empower...or should empower all local elected officials, cities, counties, school boards. There's great concern and confusion, even at the local level, about what elected officials can and cannot do in a campaign, and this was merely to clarify and allow those folks. Who better to understand local issues and local concerns than local elected officials? So, rather than preclude them from this process, I merely ask that the committee consider this, and the amendment did include allowing elected officials even at the local level to participate in the process.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR MINES: Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Mines. Senator Schimek, there are two minutes left, if you care to...she waives her opportunity. Senator Jensen, on the Beutler amendment.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. Is Senator Beutler available or...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Beutler, are you on the floor?