

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: ...I think you'd further splinter the parties, you'd further splinter the way we elect our president. I'd be happy to answer any questions. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Kristensen. The Chair recognizes Senator Schimek.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. You know the neat thing about the Unicameral is that you can be on the same side of an issue one day and working very hard together, and the next day you can be on opposite sides of the issue and doing great battle. But it's all in the name of the game, and I guess that's what's so neat about our nonpartisan Unicameral system. LB 115, the practical effect, the statute says each at large presidential elector shall cast his or her ballot for the presidential and vice presidential candidates who receive the highest number of votes in the state. Each congressional district presidential elector shall cast his or her ballot for the presidential and vice presidential candidates who receive the highest number of votes in his or her congressional district. For those of you who don't know how this system works, the respective political parties choose electors at their state conventions to represent the votes in November. And then on the ballot, of course, we choose the presidential candidates and the electors. What you may not know is that before LB 115 became law, in 1991, those five electors were free, were not bound by statute, could indeed vote for anybody they so chose. Now, practically speaking, the politics of it would not allow it in most circumstances. But the statute now says that they are bound to vote as according to their state or their congressional district. I think that the possibility that Senator Kristensen described, of changing the electoral college, is subject to debate. You know when we...when the electoral college got established, and it was established back in the very beginning, and it was established more by tradition than anything, but back then electors were used because, frankly, communication system wasn't very good, founding fathers thought that it was always better, I mean they did this in a lot of different instances, had state legislators select senators, had electors select presidential candidates. They thought that it was better than leaving it, I guess, to the straight popular vote. But communication has changed so much in those 200 plus years. Communication has changed, transportation has changed. We can turn on C-Span any day of any hour of the day or night