

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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have a library...a city of Omaha-wide, county library system, those people are going to be thinking, I believe, when they vote on this, unless we have a very good public education opportunities, that they are going to be merging, that we won't have a separate county library system set up. That's not necessarily the case here, because the first vote is going to be on whether to have a county library system, and then they're going to talk about merging with the city library system. But at the same time, as you'll see in future amendments, we're going to be giving them the authority to levy a tax. We're going to be giving some changes in our retirement system. There's a lot of problems with this kind of a process, as set out in LB 250. So I'm trying to take care of some of these problems, should this bill continue to go through in the Legislature this year. My preference is that we opt out the city of Omaha, Douglas County out of this process, because we are unique in the fact that we are nearly, the city of Omaha is nearly the same area as the county, Douglas County. So this will not benefit us in any way, shape or form. And potentially the residents of Douglas County will have more taxes levied on them, another taxing authority given to the Douglas County, and I think through this initiative petition process here the county board will be determining if the petitions are proper, and the county board shall submit the question whether to merge with the county library. At that time we won't have a county library when this is on the ballot. They're going to be talking to people about do you want a countywide library system. That's what people are going to think that they're asking, I believe. A number of voters will be confused by this, unless we have the opportunity to have a tremendous public education opportunity here. But they're going to be thinking do we want a countywide library system. And, sure, who wouldn't vote for a countywide library system. They talk about it all the time. Right now Douglas County pays \$1.2 million to the city of Omaha to allow the Douglas County residents to access the Omaha city libraries. So when they talk about merging into a countywide library system, people are going to say, yes, that's what we need to do, that's essentially what we're already doing. But what can happen, if you read very carefully through this bill, is that what this can lead to is the establishment of a county library system. We have no county library system right now. So you can establish a new entity with a new taxing authority, and then you