

to do so. So, the interest now in talking about putting the issue to a vote is not really to have the people vote on it but to defeat this bill. In all areas in the city of Omaha, there are problems of adequate representation or lack of adequate representation on the present City Council. There is special interest group which controls this Council. The main traffic artery downtown in Omaha is or was 16th Street. Under pressure from special interest groups, 16th Street was closed without a vote of the people in order that a Hilton Hotel could be erected right where 16th Street formerly was. There is what is known as a "stink plant" in South Omaha, they call it a waste treatment plant, and it has never functioned. Money is continuing to be paid out each year by the thousands of dollars by the city of Omaha for a waste treatment plant which has never worked which is a detriment to the health and welfare of the people who live in the area where it is found. Where Millard, Nebraska is concerned and I am mentioning these things to you because there is some people in Omaha and in this Legislature who are trying to do a hatchet job on this bill who are going to talk about the right of the people to vote. When Millard was to be annexed, the City Council did not want a vote of the people. Although I don't live anywhere near Millard, I did all I could in this Legislature to try to have a bill passed so that the people of Omaha and Millard could vote on whether or not Millard would be annexed. That was done without a vote of the people. In Omaha, there is a situation or setup called Sanitary Improvement District whereby people not in the city are able to build plush estates for themselves, they can put in golf courses and swimming pools, then the city will take over this area and assume the costs of paying for these facilities. Taxes will be levied on me to pay for facilities which I will never be able to use. Omaha came to the Legislature to be given permission to levy a sales tax. Yet they want to say that the Legislature has no power to legislate with reference with matters that relate to Omaha. That what happens in Omaha is not a concern to the state. Yet Omaha is more powerful as a city than most of the rest of the state combined. How can it be that a city with the population, with the financial power of the city of Omaha can be said not to have any relationship with what happens in the rest of the state. One of the biggest contractors in the world, Peter Kiewitt, has his headquarters in Omaha. The strongest newspaper in the state, the Omaha World Herald, is owned by Peter Kiewitt and its headquarters are in Omaha. We all know the influence that newspapers have as far as formulating public opinion, representing and misrepresenting certain positions. So with these few things that I have mentioned, I think it ought to be clear that what happens in Omaha is of concern to the rest of the state. There is no piece of legislation which will come through this body which does not relate to some city, some county, or some village. We vote on issues that do not directly relate to our cities and certainly in a lot of cases directly to our district. So the argument that because Omaha has a home rule charter exempts them from operation of the Legislature is like saying once the state charters a corporation, they can no longer restrict or regulate that corporation's activities. There is on file in the Attorney General's office an opinion by him that this Legislature does have power to legislate with reference to matter of government in cities having home rule charters. In order that I don't take too much time, I don't mind answering any questions that anybody would have to ask, but there are others who will speak. There are just a couple of things I would like to bring to your attention about some of the individuals on the council. Oh by the way, this bill was advanced from the committee on a 6 to 1 vote. The only one who opposed it was Mr. Art Bradley, a member of the Omaha City Council. He continued to talk about how angry people in Omaha were about the bill that I had introduced, yet not one citizen appeared to oppose the bill but there were eight who testified in favor of it and there were 60 others who I asked