

March 26, 1979

LB 345

this is our dream instead of their dream. I would like to hear more discussion about whose idea this is. Does it come from the Legislature or does it come from Omaha? Perhaps some of those that live in Omaha would like to elaborate on this.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Stoney.

SENATOR STONEY: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, a couple of questions of Senator Newell if he would respond, please.

SENATOR NEWELL: Yes, Senator Stoney.

SENATOR STONEY: Senator Newell, in looking at the fiscal note there is a comment that is indicative that currently counties of this size may opt for an election of commissioners either by district or large. Has there been with the present board or with...there must have been some impetus in your district or of people that you have spoken to to make the change that you are requesting here in LB 345.

SENATOR NEWELL: Senator Stoney, I have talked to a number of people in my district and I have talked to people all over the county. The reason I am proposing this change, as you well know Douglas County is a very large county and one of the problems that I face as a legislator and you may face also as a legislator is I get a lot of calls. I get calls from people who want me to have their garbage picked up. That is really a city issue and not a state senate issue. I get asked for people who have problems with the welfare or people that want, since my district is both inside the county and in the city, I get people that want gravel on their roads. I get people who want to widen 90th street and those people that don't want to widen 90th street. I am asked to take a public position on every issue that affects my district because I am the one person that they know that they can call who has to respond to their request. Now on a county basis there is no one person who is clearly responsible and so I get a lot of these calls. For that reason alone I favor district elections. I also favor district elections because I think in a county as large as Douglas County that there ought to be...there can be a tremendous savings in running for election and a whole lot of other reasons. This is your time. Do you want me to go into more detail?

SENATOR STONEY: Senator Newell, just for one point of clarification, since they have the option to make the