

May 21, 1979

PRESIDENT: All right, we will proceed then with LB 329. Mr. Clerk, do you want to...?

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Pirsch moves to return LB 329 to Select File for a specific amendment, the amendment would read as follows: (Read Pirsch amendment as found on page 2202 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature, through the course of this bill's travelling you have heard all the arguments of the Omaha voters turning down three plans to elect city council by district. However, I would like to point out to you that the first plan turn down in '72, 64% voted against, which would increase the number of council members from seven to nine. In '73 the increase would be from seven to twelve and that was turned down by a considerably more increase, 71%. In '78 which would keep the number of city council people at seven, only 41.5% voted against that plan. However, it was defeated because a great majority of voters did not vote, but this I think, does give some indication that the people in Omaha, at least if they are going to have a district council person election, that they would like to keep it at seven. If you do increase it to nine, this is a 28% additional salary cost plus additional staff increase, supporting staff costs and in days when we are talking about keeping costs down, I think that seven members on the council would be adequate. I think that they would represent Omaha very well. If you will recall, Lincoln, who has a district by council person program, only has four districts. Seven should be plenty for Omaha and I would hope that you could support this amendment and keep Omaha's cost down as well as keep it at the limit of seven council people to represent Omaha. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I will be very brief. This is at the tail end of the session and you heard the problems as Senator Marvel mentioned exists with the machine. Now I believe this is strictly a delaying and stalling tactic designed to put the bill in a position where no vote can be taken on it. You have seen this attempt used on Senator Newell's bill, offered by the same Senator with almost a disastrous result and effect on the bill. Senator Pirsch has never