

SENATOR DECAMP: Well, obviously, I'd like to see it advance and I think it is important, but have many more people been excused? It is my recollection we never had 25 for anything. Are most people still around?

SPEAKER NICHOL: I understand three are excused.

SENATOR DECAMP: Who?

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Chambers, Senator Hoagland and Senator Cal Carsten.

SENATOR DECAMP: I'd move the bill be advanced and pray a lot.

SPEAKER NICHOL: All right. Senator Labeledz, your light is on.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've been a member of the Banking Committee now with the exception of two years so of the nine years I have been here I've been with the Banking Committee for seven years. We've discussed and discussed, debated, both on the floor and committee, the branch banking bill, the multiholding bills. I would like to say that after we adopted John DeCamp's amendment, this LB 295 is actually a merger bill and not a branching bill and can only be used when bank owners want to merge or sell. Several years ago when branch banking was argued on this floor and in committee, the opponents predicted doom and gloom and said that the big banks would have a branch on every corner to get the deposits small banks were getting. The fact is not one of the five largest banks have built a number of branches now authorized by law. Two years ago it was also said in committee and on the floor of this Legislature that if the multibank holding companies, of the laws that were passed, the big banks would buy up the little country banks and take all their deposits to the big City of Omaha and Lincoln. The fact here again is that the largest banks in Nebraska, the Omaha National, except for the two banks that were declared failed by FDIC or the State Banking Department, has not bought one small bank. In fact, they repossessed the stock on four small banks in trouble and these banks are now for sale, if anybody on this floor would like to buy one of them. The second largest bank in the state, and I believe that is the First National of Lincoln,