

PRESIDENT: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I'd like to back up a little bit and give you a little background on the bill and I ask you to look at some of the handouts as we go along so that before I explain the amendment to the committee amendments I would like to put it in perspective a little bit so you know exactly how it fits in both in a technical sense and in a political sense. I have passed out to you a handout that has at the top, LB 516, and the first sentence of that handout says, the bill is the committee amendments plus the Beutler amendment to the committee amendment. So the description that then follows on that page describes what the two things together do. Now what I wanted to point out to you with regard to the committee amendments which is now the basic bill is to give you a sense of what is in the committee amendments. And the structure that we're dealing with in the committee amendments is, first of all, that it makes three judicial districts out of 21 judicial districts and if you flip over on the second page you have a map setting out for you those three districts. In fact, there are two maps. The front map is the district court boundaries and the second map are the county court boundaries. Now as you can see the three districts are created out of the previous 21 consist of Lancaster County as one district identified as number three in red in your map. Douglas County is the second district and then the third district are the other counties of Nebraska and the reason that we've done it this way is so that there is no suspicion created that Lincoln and Omaha are attempting to steal judges or court resources from the rest of the state. The first district which comprises 91 of the counties of Nebraska is divided into election subdistricts and this is done so that the process of the retention vote on judges is not changed. And the important thing to recognize in looking at that first district and the election subdistricts is that the election subdistricts that the lines of those subdistricts correspond exactly with the current district lines. Those election subdistricts are the judges work areas and they correspond exactly to their work areas right now. So in other words, for a two-year period and this is frozen for a two-year period, there is effectively no change in the current system. Okay, the other thing to remember is that the number of judges in each election district continues to correspond exactly with the