

Thus, in those types of cases if a dispute arises, the parties could agree to arbitrate and they could also choose to litigate in court for the dispute if they wanted to. That is the present state of the law in Nebraska. However, the amendment just enunciated by Senator Hoagland creates an exception for two classes, both of which have the ability to negotiate the terms of a contract, the two groups that are employers and employees in the collective bargaining context and contractors dealing with contractors. We are making available to these parties the option of arbitration in the future disputes if they wish to agree to it and it is important to note that the term is "if they agree." An agreement to arbitrate in the collective bargaining process is mandatory. Arbitration will not be imposed upon anyone. You have to have the agreement to arbitrate first. Should the parties to a collective bargaining agreement or should two commercial contractors agree to arbitrate future disputes, they will have accomplished two things. First, they will have relieved the burden on the judicial system and they will have agreed to use a process which will more promptly resolve their disputes. In the area of labor relations, the prompt resolution of labor disputes is important as it helps achieve the goal of obtaining labor harmony. The same holds true with respect to commercial contractors who are in the middle of a project and need a prompt resolution to the rights or obligations of such parties. Anybody familiar with litigation knows it can be incredibly lengthy. Two years is not at all an unlikely length of time to arrive at a litigated result. Use that, if you will, in the building of a building and you can see what kind of problems you have if you can't resort to arbitration and have that arbitration be binding. It is necessary to improve on the outdated rule we follow in Nebraska. LB 520 does that. Senator Hoagland's amendment to the committee amendment further makes arbitration available and for that reason it is an excellent amendment. I intend to endorse it and vote for it and hope you will too.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Lamb, please, and then Senator Withem. Okay, Senator Withem, on the amendments to the...all right, any further discussion on the amendments to the committee amendments? If not, the question is the adoption of the amendments to the committee amendments. All those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.