

far. Senator Abboud, please.

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President and colleagues, my comments will be short. I think we have had somewhat of a discussion here today on the different issue and I think, Senator Rupp, by presenting this bill has raised the issue. And whether this, in fact, even if it was passed, I doubt it would be voted on or approved by the voters in this state especially this year because I know they are upset about a couple of issues that we passed by the Legislature and so I don't think they would go about enacting this particular legislation or constitutional amendment. I would like to touch finally on one point though and that is the concern raised by a number of you in this body as to the question of the proliferation that will occur of these initiative and referendum ballots. It hasn't occurred in the past 20 years and I just don't see it occurring again or into the future. The laws were restricted severely. My feeling is they were severely restricted in 1967 when we required only registered voters to be allowed to sign those petitions. So, for example, you just can't come up to anyone and say, well, are you a registered voter or are you...you can't just come up to an individual that is over the age of 18 and have them sign a particular petition. That individual has to be a registered voter. We knocked out over 200,000 individuals by that measure in 1967. So there has been a restriction in the law since its enactment in 1912. I don't see the fears, quite frankly, I feel it is rather arrogant on members of this body to say that the public somehow knows less what is best for them than we do. We were all just common citizens prior to our anointment to the Legislature and I think it is arrogant by members of this body to feel in any way that they are somehow more knowledgeable than the average citizen on the street. I think we serve in this body for a short time. We all serve for a temporary time and I feel that the public has just as much knowledge on these issues and is just as intelligent on these issues and as a result if there is an important issue that they feel that they want to make a statement on, I feel we should allow them to do that. There is no restrictions to say that if LB 662 is stricken by the public, or the seat belts are stricken, the following year the Legislature can come back in here and pass that legislation. It might be a little bit more work for members in the body but that is a part of the process, I feel. With that, I urge the body not to advance LR 318 and that we have a good study on it over the summer and take a look at it.