

the state with an excessive number of liquor licenses being granted. Now, let me describe for a moment my understanding of why we have the current problem. We have the current problem for a very simple reason and that is that the Liquor Control Commission is compelled by statute to apply a public convenience and necessity standard to determining whether a liquor license should issue. And the Nebraska Supreme Court in recent years has interpreted that public convenience and necessity standard to require the issuance of about every license unless there is a real good reason not to do it, like, for instance, someone is a convicted felon. Now, the solution to that is to tighten up the standards to be applied by the Liquor Control Commission, give the Liquor Control Commission the discretion to deny a license through a fleshed out set of standards rather than allowing the current standards stay on the books which, as interpreted by the Supreme Court, requires the issuance of all these licenses. Now, instead, we have gone way overboard and instead we have decommissioned the commission and this bill would return to the local political subdivisions virtual absolute authority to grant liquor licenses. Now, that's going to create a lawyers' relief act. That is going to create as many different standards for the issuance of liquor licenses as there are political subdivisions around this state with the authority to grant or deny liquor licenses. It's going to be a bonanza because every time a lawyer goes to a different town to argue for or against a liquor license he's got a different standard to apply. Now, there are a number of technical problems with the bill and Senator DeCamp has passed out this blue sheet here that I think does a good job of describing what a number of those technical problems are and some of them are quite serious. Some of them are going to put the liquor statutes in this state into a chaos that is going to take years to sort out, that is going to guarantee the fact that we're going to be legislating over this issue next year and the year after and probably the year after that. But, without dealing with those technicalities, let me just talk about two broad brush issues that particularly concern me, two policy issues that I really want you to think about because I think they're important. First, the issue brought up by Senator Vard Johnson when we last discussed this bill, the problem of corrupting local public officials. I mean, look at the temptations you're offering. Look at the system you're setting up to tempt local public officials into voting or exercising judgment against their better judgment. Now we have a state appointed Liquor Control Commission with men and women eligible to serve on that commission and selected because of ability, because of expertise, because of integrity made by a