

SENATOR WITEK: So before we start down that path, before you look at this as just an Omaha Police Department bill, you have to realize that if you start something like this, any one of us could come in and make this type of change to any collective bargaining agreement in our own areas and I want you to really give it some thought before you decide to do something like that before we start confusing you with facts and figures on just the Omaha Police Department. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Witek. Senator Bromm.

SENATOR BROMM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Senator Chambers, would you yield to a question, please?

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes, I will.

SENATOR BROMM: Senator Chambers, when was this contract negotiated by the city that takes away the absolute authority of the chief to assign experienced or inexperienced officers at various...?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Based on the information I have, it first started about 20 years ago. So that's when they started the erosion of the power of the chief to make these assignments.

SENATOR BROMM: And has there any been...one letter I thought I saw that you passed out from Chief Skinner indicated that in 1992 or three perhaps, there was some change in their agreement which allowed them to put a few more experienced officers in various areas. Is that accurate?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes, that's true.

SENATOR BROMM: So that has...it hasn't remained the same through all those years. There have been changes negotiated between the parties?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: This, to my knowledge, is the first time a change like that had occurred and it is all that at the bargaining table the city could wrest from the union. And my problem with that, Senator Bromm, is that it shouldn't be dependent on what the union is willing to concede as to whether