

continue with debate, I would like to call the senators' attention to the area under the south balcony. A special guest today of Senator Schmitt is Roger Goldfish, Mayor of Ord, Nebraska. Would you please rise and be recognized. Welcome to the Chamber. And under the north balcony is a special guest of Senator Cudaback. He is Brian Bosshamer from Amherst, who is a graduate student at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. Welcome to the Chamber. Thank you. Senator Beutler, you're next, followed by Senator Hall.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Madam President, members of the Legislature, contrary to the indications that have been given to you by the latest two or three speakers, I feel like the rule of germaneness is completely out of control in its liberality. And I would like to speak against the motion to overrule the Chair and in support of...of the Chair's ruling. The fact of the matter is that with regard to how the germaneness rule is working in this Legislature, it's actually working to destroy a whole number of your other rules. If you start out, for example, with a priority bill system, you will recognize, with what has happened so far this year, that many, many, many bills that are not priority bills have been amended into other bills, and have, in fact, come ahead of priority bills. And why does this happen? It happens because of a liberal germaneness rule. If you would enact a stricter germaneness rule, then priority bills would, in fact, be priority bills. So that particular system is being corrupted. Beyond that, in order to get a bill that's been killed out of committee, as you know, you need 30 votes. But because we've had such a loose germaneness rule, the killed bills are simply proposed as amendments to other bills, and once again the system, as we recognize it, is being corrupted by a liberal germaneness rule. Another rule we have is that all bills should be debated on three stages of debate. But when you have a liberal germaneness rule, you can amend something on, on Select File, and corrupt that rule also, so that you have only two stages of debate. Or you can even amend it onto Final Reading, so that you have just one stage of debate. And, by that means, the basic protection of three stages of debate, which is the protection that we built in when we went to the Unicameral system, is corrupted. Beyond that, the public hearing process that we hold so dear, every bill has a public hearing. But when you have a loose germaneness rule, that goes by the by, too, doesn't it, from time to time, because you can amend into bills material that has not even been a bill, but, in fact, may not have had a public hearing at all, may not