

officers or some of the...who have been in a particular section of town, they want to go to another section of town, will bid out and then what you have are less experienced officers in the section of town that they've bid out of, whether it be North Omaha or South Omaha, and what happens then is you don't have the more experienced police officers helping with the junior officers in facing some of the crime problems that they...that exist. And if you look at the statistics, the major or the shootings, the cuttings or whatever it is, the violent crime occurs primarily or for the most part in the, first of all, in the north section, secondly in the south section, third in the west section of town, so you get some of the good officers out of...or the more experienced officers out of that...those downtown sections. Now I will agree with those who have argued that this is a local issue. I will also agree that for the most part many of these issues have been bargained and should be bargained in the collective bargaining process. I am bothered, however, by this issue that Senator Chambers raises and that is the geographic distribution area. I am bothered because what could happen is an experienced officer could bid out of an area and never go back and that we lose efficiency in that and maybe one of the answers is to divide the city into more than three sections, which is what the PERF study recommends, or maybe there's another way of staffing that will alleviate the problem, getting more patrolmen on the street or whatever the solution is. The issue that Senator Chambers raises in this body is a real issue and in talking to police officers and several that I've talked to in the last couple of weeks agree that is a problem. Now should or should not the Legislature be involved in deciding that issue? That's really the ultimate consideration and, at this point, I'm willing to advance this bill because I think it is a very, very important issue and, again, it is my hope that the police division and the police union, who are most intimately involved in this issue, will get together between now and Select File and try to devise a scheme that will talk about and reflect this concern which is not only a concern of the city, and I might say that the City of Omaha has bargained away some critical points. They have bargained away over the last 20 years, for whatever reason, whether...and primarily I would suspect it's probably economic, have bargained away some very important management prerogatives, one being distribution of police officers and then it's hard for us as a Legislature then to step in and say, you know, we're going to bail the city administration out for making those...those mistakes. And we can get involved in that dialogue all day long