

I urge support for the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate Gallagher, you have about five and a quarter minutes to allocate.

DELEGATE GALLAGHER: Mr. President, I yield two of those minutes to Delegate Borom.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate Borom.

DELEGATE BOROM: Mr. President, and fellow delegates, I have heard reference quite frequently to the whole problem of districting, and I would say as to those who are concerned, that we have to get involved in districting. I think you are assuming that every time we have to re-district that the representative is living on the border line. Nine times out of ten he is not on the border line.

We heard references to parochialism. I think we ought to worry about his political parochialism where we have multi-member districts. We should be concerned about getting quality, qualified members in the General Assembly.

When the political machines decide nothing is at stake, they give the voters in the State a chance to elect quality representation. I make this allusion to those of you who are here in the Constitutional Convention. I would say in the main most of you have no political gains. The voters were given a chance to put in quality people. We have passed on issues that the General Assembly would not touch because of prior commitments. If we go with single-member districts we at least allow on a smaller basis individuals to run who have qualifications. If you go to single-member districts, it does not mean that you are not going to get qualified representatives.

THE PRESIDENT: You have one-quarter minute.

DELEGATE BOROM: I would suggest strongly to you that in order to prevent power groups from funding and swaying elections on a multi-member district basis, you give the voters of this State an opportunity to have their own representatives here.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate Gallagher.

DELEGATE GALLAGHER: Mr. President, I yield two minutes to Delegate Marion, and then the remainder of the time to Delegate Gleason.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate Marion.

DELEGATE MARION: Mr. President and fellow delegates, Delegate Gallagher

opened. He said he would not repeat some of the same arguments which had been made here, and made so well the last time this issue was considered, and when single-member districts were adopted by an overwhelming vote of this Convention sitting in a Committee of the Whole. But to me those arguments are persuasive. The argument of visibility of the legislator is a compelling reason for adopting in the constitution a provision for single-member districts. We can increase and lighten the legislators' visibility to the people he represents by making him the one legislator who represents one particular group of people.

We did do that by assuring he is the only person representing that particular group of people. The same situation will apply to the members of people collectively across the State. Thirty-three thousand people in every part of the State will elect a single representative, and I think that if we give them an opportunity to see best, to see more clearly who their legislator is, how he votes on issues which affect them, and the State, that we can best leave it to the judgment of the people who are represented there to make the decision—

THE PRESIDENT: You have one-half minute.

DELEGATE MARION: —as to who they should have representing them in the General Assembly.

I believe this is the fair system because if we allow for a mixture of single- and multiple-member districts where we need multi-member districts the most, or multi-member districts where we most need single-member districts.

I think the fairest and best way to achieve this is to defeat the amendment, and to stick with the recommendation of the Committee on the Legislative Branch, and the Committee of the Whole, and support single-member districts.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate Gleason, you have one minute.

DELEGATE GLEASON: It seems to me that the criteria on which this issue should be judged would be which system will help us to get the best qualified legislature that we can get for the State of Maryland. If there is any comment that is uniform in nature that I have heard from old and present members of the legislature, it is to the effect that fully thirty to forty percent of the members who are sent down here under the present system are just not qualified enough for the job. These are their