

March 1, 1988

LB 904

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. The gentleman from Kimball, Senator Baack.

SENATOR BAACK: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker and members, as a board member, a former board member, school board member for eight years from a small school, who everybody keeps saying these are the ones that are going to be terribly impacted by this bill, and as a former director on the Nebraska Association of School Boards, I probably should get up and support this kill motion but I'm not going to. I think that Senator McFarland has brought a bill here and brought something to light here that warrants some very serious discussion. I think that probably the opposition from the school boards is probably based on the fact that they don't want to have to go through the process of reassessing the programs that they offer in their schools. I think they worry about things like that. They like to keep things right in order and keep things going the way they always have gone over the past few years. I know that the Association of School Boards has had a longstanding resolution against legislation like this. I'm not so sure it was a well-thought-out resolution but it has been longstanding anyway. I think that, you know, what we're talking about here is not allowing schools to enlarge contracts after the contracts have been signed. That's what we are talking about here, and I think that if both parties understand the contracts going in, there aren't going to be the problems created that are being bantered about here. I think that as long as everybody knows where they stand in the contracts, we're not going to have any problem with that. I think that the main thing that I see in this bill is some of the things that Senator Bernard-Stevens was talking about and that is, is that we're going to put the focus back on teaching. I think we've gotten away from that in so many cases that we have created some serious problems out there by having too many activities and I think what a bill like this does is if you can't find anybody on your certificated staff to do some of these extracurricular activities, then you're going to have to reassess your position and say, is this a program that we need to offer anymore? If there is no one willing to do it, do we really need this program anymore? It is going to cause some reassessment of that and I think it is reassessment that is good for the future of education in the State of Nebraska. And I think that what this bill does is it focuses in on teaching,