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Transcriber's Office

Executive Board Committee
February 08, 2018

[LB1053 LB1099]

The Executive Board of the Legislative Council met at 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 8, 2018, in Room 2102 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on LB1053 and LB1099. Senators present: Dan Watermeier, Chairperson; John Kuehn, Vice Chairperson; Kate Bolz; Sue Crawford; Dan Hughes; John McCollister; and Jim Scheer. Senators absent: Ernie Chambers; Tyson Larson; and John Stinner.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: (Recorder malfunction)...my name is Dan Watermeier from Syracuse and I represent the 1st Legislative District in southeast Nebraska, and I serve as the Chair of the Executive Board. Our hearing today is your public part of the legislative process and your opportunity to express your position on the proposed legislation before us today. The committee members may come and go during the hearing. We get called away for various reasons. It is not our indication we are not interested in the bill but just part of the process. To better facilitate today's proceedings, I ask a little bit for procedure. Please silence or turn off your cell phones. The order of testimony will be the introducer, proponents, opponents, neutral, and then closing by the introducer. If you are testifying, please make sure you fill out a green sheet. When you come up to testify, please hand the green sheet to the page along with any handouts. We would like 12 handouts. If you don't have that many, we can get those from the page. Please state and spell your name for the record at the start of your testimony. Each testifier will have five minutes to speak. After four minutes, you'll have a yellow light. And at the red, I'll ask you to clean it up. If you will not be testifying but want to go on the record as having a position on a bill today, there is a white sheet in the back of the room as well, and you can fill that out and hand it to the page. If you have written testimony (inaudible) copies. I'd like to make even a new policy we started this year in most committees. We would like to have...if you're not going to go on the record, we'd like to have that testimony to my office by 5:00 the day before so we can get it into the record. To my immediate right is legal counsel, Janice Satra; to my left is committee clerk, Laura Olson. And at this time, I'll have the committee members introduce themselves. Speaker Scheer.

SENATOR SCHEER: Jim Scheer, District 19.

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: John McCollister, District 20.

SENATOR BOLZ: Kate Bolz, District 29.

SENATOR KUEHN: John Kuehn, District 38.

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SENATOR CRAWFORD: Good afternoon. Sue Crawford, District 45.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: And also helping us today is our page, Heather Bentley, from Miller, Nebraska. All right. With that, we will open up our first hearing, LB1053, Senator Wishart. Welcome.

SENATOR WISHART: Thank you. Well, good afternoon, Chairman Watermeier, members of the Executive Board. My name is Anna Wishart, A-n-n-a W-i-s-h-a-r-t, and I represent the 27th District in west Lincoln. I'm here today to introduce LB1053, a bill that would direct the Legislature's Planning Committee to develop a ten-year strategic plan for the state. It was the intent of the Planning Committee when developed that this committee would help guide the Legislature by collecting and analyzing data, identifying long-term issues facing the state, issuing a yearly report, and proposing legislation. From the statute, it reads, "State government has significant challenges to face. An ever changing global economy, an aging population, out-migration of educated young people, and constantly expanding needs for services, among other issues, require that the Legislature consider the long-term trends and factors affecting the welfare of Nebraskans and the long-term implications of the decisions made by the members of the Legislature." I believe the next logical step is for the Planning Committee to develop a strategic plan to help guide current and future Legislatures by utilizing the research and data gathered by previous Legislatures and the Planning Committee. LB1053 would direct, as I said before, the Legislature's Planning Committee to develop a ten-year strategic plan and evaluate benchmarks set forth in the plan every two years. The goal of the strategic plan is to provide the Legislature with guidance as it faces new and emerging trends, revenue fluctuations, natural disasters, infrastructure, development and maintenance, work force demands, and the varying needs of the residents of Nebraska. It is common practice for businesses to develop strategic plans to improve their financial sustainability and future performance. I believe LB1053 would help guide our Legislature and our state through both times of uncertainty and prosperity. And I did have a chance to speak with former Senator John Harms about this legislation and we talked through this. And he was generally in support of it. An example he gave was that Nebraska is one of the highest rates of pediatric cancer than any other state in the country, which I believe would probably be a priority of every legislative member to find ways that we can reduce that. He said there should be a report coming out soon that kind of identifies where the pockets of increasing rates of pediatric cancer in our state are occurring. You know, if we as a Legislature were able to find out what were the reasons for this and why Nebraska had the highest rates of pediatric cancer I think logically the next step would be for the committee like the Planning Committee to put forth a strategic plan for how this Legislature would look to reduce that public health problem. So that's just an example of what I'm thinking about with this legislation. Happy to take any questions. [LB1053]

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you, Senator Wishart. Questions from the committee? All right. Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry. Senator Crawford at the last second. [LB1053]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: Thanks, Senator Watermeier. The pediatric cancer is a great example. I was going to ask for an example maybe of a benchmark or priority that you would see that we would be addressing with this kind of ten-year plan. So didn't know if you had another example or a benchmark example. [LB1053]

SENATOR WISHART: You know, I mean some of the examples that we deal with on the Appropriations Committee is sometimes it feels like we're very...we're reacting to issues that have occurred, whether it be budget shortfalls, which has kind of been my experience now as an Appropriations Committee member. But even in times of prosperity, you know, if...just on the appropriations side if one of the issues that the Planning Committee wanted to take up and create a strategic plan for is what do we do in times of prosperity to make sure we're putting away for tough times? That would be another example. [LB1053]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: Excellent. Thank you. [LB1053]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you. Further questions? All right. Thank you, Senator Wishart. [LB1053]

SENATOR WISHART: And I will be here for closing. [LB1053]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay. We'll see who else is behind you here. Are there further proponents on LB1053? Proponents? Seeing none, is there anyone in the opposition to LB1053? Anyone in the neutral? All right, Senator Wishart to close and Senator Wishart waives closing on LB1053. That closes the hearing on that LB and we'll open up LB1099, Senator Kuehn if Laura is ready. Ready? Senator Kuehn. [LB1053]

SENATOR KUEHN: (Exhibits 1, 2, 3) All right. Thank you, colleagues, members of the Executive Board. I am John Kuehn, J-o-h-n K-u-e-h-n, and I represent District 38 in the Nebraska Legislature. And today I'm here to present to you LB1099, not the tax form, but a bill regarding the establishment of a Legislative Ethics Committee. I introduced the legislation in part--you'll note that it's very broad, it's very nonspecific--but as a formal attempt of, if nothing else, beginning the conversation starting to critically look at a lot of side conversations that I think have happened over my tenure in the Legislature regarding what happens when there are questions about ethical conduct of senators or staff and how those should be addressed. And while certainly recent events across the country and questions involving policy such as sexual

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harassment and others certainly can be a potential part of this, it is much broader. It goes into issues of conduct. It can go into issues of conflict of interest. And my purpose in introducing the legislation is simply to begin that discussion of does the body wish to do something and what may be one forum to do it? So what you'll notice in the bill is that the bulk of the language of the legislation establishes the committee. The committee would be chaired by an individual elected by the body as a whole and then would be composed of six members determined by the Committee on Committees, two from each Congressional District. You also note I chose the term "board" as opposed to "committee" so that there was not any confusion about the role of a committee versus a board. Now states vary and are all over the map in terms of how they handle it. And so because I love handouts, I've got a number of them for you. I have a table which includes the 42 states that have different internal committees for ethics and what their scope is. This is independent of many states which also have commissions which are much broader in their scope. So we're one of only eight states that does not have an internal legislative committee specifically to address ethics. If you look at the list, the first four on that list: Arkansas, Connecticut, Kentucky, and Louisiana, while they do not have legislative committees that address ethics, they do have state ethics commissions that look at a broader issue of ethical behavior among and across all state government. Nebraska and Oklahoma, we do both have commissions. Obviously, we have the Accountability and Disclosure Commission that deals primarily with campaign finance and those types of issues. Oklahoma operates on a similar. They have the Oklahoma Ethics Commission which primarily deals with campaign ethics. In the bill, I don't even attempt to prescribe what type of ethical behavior or how the process may go. I simply outline that a committee will be established and that one of the charges of that committee then would be to develop the procedures for how should an ethics complaint be filed; how would the process go; what constitutes a violation; what constitutes an appropriate act; what if any disciplinary actions are appropriate or even available; and then how would any such sanctions be carried out and established. And then finally, just to be clear, that nothing in this precludes an individual's liability should it be a legal or civil court issue. So as much as anything, it's...I think it's worth discussing if this is a priority for the body. There's many ways we could handle this. I've had conversations with a number of you. And as a member of the Rules Committee myself, there's questions about should this and can this be handled via rules? I think that is certainly a possibility although, you know, the last couple of years we've adopted rules as a pro forma kind of process without significant adaptation. The other is...I'm just going to pass this around because the bill does include not only senators but also staff. If you haven't looked at some of the NCSL resources on codes of conduct, and again this is just a model to give the members of the committee an example of some of the things that are out there that provide support to states, this is just an example of a Model Code of Conduct for Legislative Staff that NCSL provides that is a great starting point for that discussion of what are the expectations of professionalism and behavior among employees of the Legislature. So I'm happy to have a dialogue. I look forward to a further and more robust discussion about this process and its importance or whether we don't feel it is important for our body so. [LB1099]

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: I have a question to start off with, Senator Kuehn, because you're on Rules and you mentioned this. If we were to pass this, this year and right away next...and you envisioning with the next biennium we'd have a chairman elected, would we need a rules change to even start that very first year? [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: I don't think so. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: And I think that's something we would have to work out. So one of my reasons and I've talked with...the Clerk and I have had discussions about, you know, studying this issue and really getting specific over the interim, one of the reasons I wrote this bill in this manner was that the first charge of the board before it even gets going would be to establish those policies and procedures. And so we would first have to elect a chairman and then starting and reconvening with the One Hundred Sixth Legislature seemed like a good time to organize. And we would have to look at how that would fit within our rules process simply because statute supersedes rules. So if in the statute we have the board established, it would supersede the rule. But we might have to look at a rules change to fit and align with the statute. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Right. But even thinking that first day in the Legislature if we have the statute in place, we should be able to provide a place to elect the chairman because that's going to happen on that first day. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: Right. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: So we wouldn't need a rules change to just at least get that off the ground. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: Right. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I realize most of your work is going to happen that first year, which I'm fine with that so... [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: Yeah. And in my... [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Beings you serve on Rules I think is a perfect chance to... [LB1099]

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SENATOR KUEHN: Yeah, absolutely. And in my time line I guess that's why even though there's a lot of details to work out, that is the function of the committee. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Yeah. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: And since we will be reorganizing, you could elect a chair, Committee on Committees could determine composition of the committee, and they can work through the details over...and it may take a year or two to even decide how this process should work. And again, I just...I firmly believe that a process that everyone understands is better than a question mark. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Right. Speaker Scheer. [LB1099]

SENATOR SCHEER: I don't disagree with the concept. My concern is doing it legislatively rather than from a rules perspective. Because just as we found out in the election challenge, we have statute, then we have rules and they sometimes contradict each other. And I would rather see this go into a rule change because as I look at some of the terminology, and I'm not trying to wordsmith, but okay, we're going to determine what's inappropriate. Well, any of us during any time during the floor would say, well, you know, those comments are completely inappropriate. Okay, well, I know, but by our rules you can say that. So, you know, how we're going to fine tune that and so you have a statute saying that you can't be inappropriate but we have rules that would define what inappropriate is. And I'd hate to have back in the conflict of one versus the other. I sort of like the idea, but I would rather see it be our rule change than legislatively. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: That's absolutely fair. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Yeah. Thank you, Speaker Scheer. Senator Bolz, did you have your hand up? [LB1099]

SENATOR BOLZ: Yeah, I've got a couple of questions. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Go ahead. [LB1099]

SENATOR BOLZ: I think the first is you referenced some current debates and the one that first comes to my mind is sexual harassment. How would you see...it seems to me that we've already got some rules and policies in place around those kinds of things. How would you see those two things intersecting? Shouldn't our employment policies be in place such that that is already prohibited and managed? [LB1099]

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SENATOR KUEHN: And I think it is. What I would see with the establishment of a committee is that it centralizes and provides a definitive process. I think in reference to some recent media articles even around this issue, go...despite the fact that we have a staff and faculty hand...or staff, sorry, staff handbook--some things die hard here--despite the fact that we have staff policies, go to a member of the staff and ask them if you felt that you were, for example, sexually harassed, what would you do? And right now the process, while I think there is a process and there's outlining it, it really puts a lot of responsibility that I'm not sure is fair in the hands of a couple of individuals. So you're looking at legal counsel; you're looking at potentially the Executive Board Chair; or you're looking at in some cases maybe the Clerk of the Legislature who then have to make a judgment call at that point about where and how to address that complaint. And so whether it is a sexual harassment complaint...and we don't have a policy if a member of the public or we have a lot of people who are not employees of the Legislative Council who we interact with on a daily basis. We have members of the media who are present and interact with members of the body and with staff. There are members of the public who are interacting with the staff and employees of the Legislative Council. What would be their recourse at this point if they encountered a situation in which they felt was unethical, whether that be a hostile environment type situation, whether that be abusive behavior? And so it's developing a process that everyone who interacts with our Legislature has a clear understanding of this is where I would go, this is the process that will be followed and really protects both the individual who is the complainant as well as provides due process for the individual who is...the claim is made against. And so I think with any type of process--and I visited with a number of our counterparts in other states. Rob Taylor is the representative from Iowa who I've gotten to know well who is the chair of the ethics committee in the House in Iowa. And, you know, they certainly as a part of their function take into account all of the federal workplace laws and all that. So I mean there's a violation of a federal workplace law that may be independent of a violation of their ethical standards so. [LB1099]

SENATOR BOLZ: I mean, I guess one place to start in having this conversation about ethics and protections and appropriate behavior might be to review our...the current way of doing things. Because whether something like this moves forward or not, I want people who are in this building to feel like they have the appropriate protections to know what to do. And if our internal policies need to be strengthened, it seems to me that we could start there. In terms of your bill references the employees as well as senators and, you know, my other question would be how to protect their employment status and how we make sure that they have meaningful ways of addressing challenges that come up. It might put an employee in a tough spot to have to bring an issue to an elected member versus a member of the professional staff. And an elected member may or may not have that depth of knowledge that you're referencing related to federal employment law. And so I think there's some maybe tricky territory in terms of the employees and how this would marry up with existing expectations for our policies and procedures, federal law, and all of those other things. One last comment just in terms of the discussion is I also

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wonder about the confidentiality provisions, not so much for elected members because I think we have made a choice to be in the public eye, but for employees, someone's professional reputation could be impacted by even the existence of a complaint, and that I think deserves some caution. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: Absolutely. And I guess you're, to my mind, making exactly what I see is the case for having a formal process. Because right now for, let's say an employee, how they would make that complaint is somewhat ad hoc. And I think part of this process would be what is the standardized process for filing a complaint? It certainly wouldn't be I can't, in my mind, imagine that it would be walk up to any member of the Ethics Committee and that's who receives the complaint. And that's part of the procedure. So if an individual does have a complaint they wish to address, who is the intake officer, which is how it is in a workplace? You know, you have certain mandatory reporters, but you also have individuals who begin the process of investigation. What is the process? So does that mean that legal counsel for the Executive Board, for example, is the person who does the initial intake investigation and determines is this an employment law issue that needs to be referred to an employment law area? Is this an issue of ethics which gets referred to the ethics board? Does that initial...what are the standards for investigation? What are the standards of evidence that are brought in and even developing that process? To my mind at this point, we don't have anything that resembles that so. [LB1099]

SENATOR BOLZ: Just can I take a follow-up? [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Keep going. [LB1099]

SENATOR BOLZ: The bill doesn't have a fiscal note so it doesn't contemplate having a separate legal counsel for this committee. But it seems to me if we're developing in-depth and technical beyond my skill set certainly, regulations and policies for conduct and behavior we would probably have a pretty heavy lift from a legal representative. What are your thoughts about that? [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: Certainly could be. I mean, you know, some states if you look through the list--one state I remember off the top of my head has ten trial judges that are available that actually do the initial determination of whether or not it rises to something that goes to the committee. And I think that's part of the process that has to work out. I mean, certainly to meet employment standards now we have to have individuals who are trained to handle our employees. So whether their expertise can be utilized under existing resources or it's something where the committee decides, you know, I don't know that we have enough issues that it would rise to the idea that we need a full-time committee counsel to handle ethical issues, I would hope that's not where we're at as a body, but certainly I think that's one of the charges of the committee

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would be determining what resources are required to make sure that we are living up to the standards that we as a body wish to hold ourselves and the people who work here to. [LB1099]

SENATOR BOLZ: Thanks. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Good questions. Senator McCollister. [LB1099]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know you're early on in the process, but Section 2(2) deals with the composition of the committee. How do we avoid one political party or another having dominate that committee? [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: I have absolutely no objection to there being further requirements. I chose six because it was a manageable committee that had equal representation across the state and a committee chair that could break a potential tie. So if there's a difference or restriction on committee composition, I am absolutely open. I'm not married to any particular idea in terms of committee formulation. You also note that I did not choose it to be a select committee that is appointed by Exec Board and that was intentional because clearly any appeals process, for example, to an ethics board would probably get appealed to this board. So in my mind in suggesting committee composition or how it would be determined, having it separate and distinct from the Exec Board so that the Executive Board could serve potentially as an appeals body was important. But again, that's something certainly subject to discussion and debate. [LB1099]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Thank you, well said. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Senator Crawford. [LB1099]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Senator Kuehn, for bringing this bill and starting this discussion. I echo my concerns about the interaction with existing processes for staff. I know that we're not very familiar with them and may not be able to...and a staff member who hasn't had an issue before may not be able to know what they are. But I do think that we...I know that we have processes for them to follow in terms of concerns and complaints. And I have in the past been on the committee for harassment and so there are senate members who are involved in those issues if need be. So I do believe we have processes there. I think identifying what those processes are to delineate what would go through existing processes versus what might come to this committee is key. And I do think thinking long and hard about the staff part will be important in terms of making sure they don't get in some kind of political battle... [LB1099]

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SENATOR KUEHN: Absolutely. [LB1099]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: ...which, you know, if this is all made up of elected officials, politics would sure follow. So that, I believe, is an important consideration for us in moving forward. And the second thing is really thinking about the party question and issue. I know we are officially a nonpartisan body. But I believe in some partisan bodies there's some recognition or attention to making sure the ethics committee is very bipartisan, again, to try to make it very clear, protect it from being dominated by any one party or another. And that's a little trickier in our situation, again, because we're a nonpartisan body; but still an important consideration for the credibility of the ethics committee in terms of moving forward and making sure people feel comfortable with what may happen there. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: You have no objection from me on those considerations. To my mind, what I worry and what my fear is in the absence of a process is they all become political. And that in the absence of clear process, we're breaking down into questions of popularity or...and we're really putting a judgment call on the shoulders of people like, oh well, they're a nice person and they didn't mean to, you know, all those kinds of things that are not necessarily clear and transparent and do set up for the potential of unequal treatment depending upon who you are. So my goal and objective would be that the board take whatever measures are required to maintain its impartiality and maintain its objectivity and avoid those types of conflicts. So you have no objection from me at all on whether that's partisan or geographic, ideological or gender basis on the representation. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Good question. More? [LB1099]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: Yes. Thank you, Chair Watermeier. Just... [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Senator Bolz. I'm sorry. Go ahead, Senator Crawford. [LB1099]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: I was just going to ask one other... [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Continue, continue. [LB1099]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: Thank you. Thank you. I was just going to ask one other question, follow-up question in terms of whether or not other states that you've looked at, do they have some kind of mechanism where like key guidelines or boundaries are then approved by the body

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itself? I suppose if we do it through the rules process maybe that would go through our rules process. If we do it in statute, it would be a little different. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: Yeah. I mean I think the promulgation of what those characteristics are is something that whether the statute guides the board...statute authorizes the board and gives the board its charge and the rules then delineates and it's through the rules process that those specifics would be endorsed and ultimately passed by the body I think is certainly a discussion worth having, absolutely. [LB1099]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: That's all. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Very good. Senator Bolz. [LB1099]

SENATOR BOLZ: It seems to me that some of your comments about the importance of process and making sure there isn't bias within the board would lead us more towards having an external committee rather than internal. An internal committee I think it's hard to see how a member who on a regular basis has to vote on another member's bill or vote for them in terms of leadership positions could ever be fully unbiased. So I'm just curious what your...why you made the choice to make it an internal body versus an external one. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: The commissions versus committees is a longstanding debate and discussion among the whole idea of legislative ethics. So I won't go into a great detail. There's a wonderful handout which I didn't bring which shows the comparison between how a commission operates and how a committee operates. The reason I looked at an internal as opposed to an external is while some states have community members which sit and are outside parties which are a part of a broader commission but also have elected representatives, I do believe that there is an important optics to us establishing a mechanism to police ourselves. I think that it gives confidence to the public that we care about the ethical standards of our institution and that we ourselves know best when something has crossed the line. I think when you talk to members of the community they can look from the outside and they can see a lot of things, whether it's, you know, and ethics extends far beyond issues of harassment which tends to, again, be the focus because it's an important part of it but also you're looking at things like conflict of interest, interactions with special interests, receipt of potentially money or influences that may influence a vote. It's very difficult for someone from the outside to really understand how a legislator operates in terms of what factors do and do not go into their mind when they're casting a vote. And so I think it's important that we have that internal perspective. I personally believe an external commission would probably be much stricter on us than we may be on ourselves. Although I'm not opposed to that, I do think that it's important that we have that experience of being a legislator and how the body works and how it operates to establishing the ethical

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guidelines. And the second is the public perception. I think that it is very important that the public understand we are willing to police ourselves. The most dangerous thing to our body would be a public perception that we are some sort of an insider's club and we operate by a different set of rules that our constituents would never operate on in their workplace. And so I think it's a clear message to the state and to our constituents that we are willing to step forward and make the tough decisions for ourselves and each other. So I think self-policing is important. [LB1099]

SENATOR BOLZ: Yeah. I wonder if there's not some middle ground in terms of some of the other states that have a mixed board or commission so that you can draw on the expertise of someone who is trained in ethics or who's trained in the law or, you know, maybe even an alumni who has that experience but now has the distance to be able to be a fair judge. So I just wonder if the makeup of the committee could be more balanced. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: It's a worthy point of discussion. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Speaker Scheer. [LB1099]

SENATOR SCHEER: Well, in regards to that though, I guess I don't see that ethics should be any different than any of our other rules. And I look at, for example, last year in the election challenge we were all supposed to be independent and charged to make the decision based on whatever was brought before us. And I don't think party politics or individual persuasion or closeness to anybody had anything to do with (inaudible). And so I think to a certain extent you cut the body's membership a little bit assuming that they will be able to do things appropriately when we put ourselves in that position every day and by our rules. But my concern with the more independent is they become the committee because they're the only ones that's selected to talk about staff. But in a term limited life, the staff continue forever. [LB1099]

_____: (Inaudible.) [LB1099]

SENATOR SCHEER: They're here for a longer period than certainly the senators. And so then you end up having staff or others outside dictating rather than the body policing itself. and I look at this as being more of a mechanism for us to police ourselves and to control and judge ourselves rather than somebody from the outside. [LB1099]

SENATOR BOLZ: Briefly, I also thought that Judge Connolly's role on that commission was pretty helpful and important which brings forth consideration of the internal/external. [LB1099]

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: Good comments. Further questions for Senator Kuehn? All right. Thank you, Senator. [LB1099]

SENATOR KUEHN: Appreciate the conversation. [LB1099]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Yeah, absolutely. All right. We'll open up for proponents on LB1099. Seeing none, opponents for LB1099. Those in the neutral. All right. Senator Kuehn to close. Senator Kuehn waives closing. Thank you all for attending and we will close the hearing on LB1099. We will go into Exec. [LB1099]