

March 9, 1982

LB 652

SENATOR VARD JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I rise in support of Senator Hoagland's motion to kill LB 652 and I have spoken once on my philosophy regarding certification of teachers and their use in all classrooms throughout our state. I want to discuss a related and similar point to the comments I made earlier this morning. It strikes me that one of the commonplace beliefs in society is this, every person can be a teacher. Now I would happen to agree with that belief because I know as a father and as a legislator and as a lawyer and as a citizen and as a member of the human race I engage in the teaching function all of the time. In one way or the other I am imparting knowledge and values and convictions. So I do believe in the concept that every person can be a teacher but I also believe very strongly that those persons that will be present on a daily basis in the classrooms in our state, whether those classrooms occur in Central High School in Omaha, Nebraska or occur in Holy Name Elementary School in Omaha, Nebraska or occur in the Faith Christian School in Louisville, Nebraska, those persons need to be trained in the art of teaching, and it is an art. The art of teaching very simply is the ability to communicate over the long pull with young minds to impart values and knowledge and to be there at the creation, to be that spark which will take the young intellect and cause that young intellect to become inflamed with a passion for learning, and for education, and for all of the principal values of western civilization, and I do believe that is an art. I do not think that the ability to ignite the fire is something that can be done by the untrained person on a regular basis. It certainly can happen but it is not done on a regular basis but rather it is the trained teacher who can take the young mind and can cause that young mind to see the full possibilities of learning. Last week I read a very...just an exciting column in the New Yorker magazine stated by a boy fifteen years old, a student at Stuyvesant (Phonetic) High School in Brooklyn, New York who was one of the forty finalists in the Westinghouse science competition and his paper is on the theory of twin primes and nobody in this body knows what a twin prime was. I didn't know what a twin prime was until I read the article but as you well know there are some numbers in mathematics that are not divisible by any other numbers except one and themselves. Three is a prime and five is a prime and because three and five are two apart they are twin primes and this boy was developing a basis for determining when twin primes would occur in the numbering system. Now why did this boy become interested in this project? Because he had a science teacher at Stuyvesant High School who suggested to him, a keen intellect, that he think about entering the Westinghouse competition