

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I rise, basically, on the bill. However, since the Warner amendment is up, I will speak to the amendment as well. I would rise in support of the amendment for a very simple reason, and I think that reason is that the amendment would make a bad bill a little better. I am concerned, as Senator Moore is concerned, that we have a lot of votes in favor of this bill it appears from the kill motion. I am hoping that is not necessarily true, but it appears that that is the case. I am also opposed to the bill. I was opposed to the bill last year and I was pleased that Senator Moore offered the kill motion so that we could have a good debate on it. However, I didn't see too much debate on the negative side and so I am going to take this opportunity to speak on the bill in general. What Senator Moore was trying to point out to the body I believe, and I think he did an excellent job of doing so, was not as to whether or not the State of Nebraska needs to have good international relations with people coming to the state from across the world, or that we don't need to have good relations with business groups or organizations that are coming to try to work out trade agreements, work out contracts, so that we can export some of our products, especially in the production crops and livestock area. I don't believe that Senator Moore said, and I am sure that he did not mean it, if he did, that these are not good things to happen. What Senator Moore is trying to say, what he has said, is two things; one, we don't need the protocol office to achieve these things, and, two, we don't need a new agency of government that is likely, and there isn't any question in my mind that it would be this way, that would grow. Senator Moore pointed out that we do have a Department of Economic Development with quite a substantial budget whose only goal is to promote economic development in the State of Nebraska. To me, the goal of that agency is at extreme close goals with what this bill is trying to do, if, indeed, the issue is international marketing, international cooperation. We don't need a separate office for that. If the office is going to be created so that we can show off Nebraska for purposes of the Unicameral or for just purposes of tourism, we have those mechanisms in place already. We don't need a separate office for that. Another thing that concerns me is this is an appropriation of General Funds, state taxpayers General Funds. We have many agencies of government that are already in this business to certain degrees, one of which Senator Moore did not point out, I don't believe anyway, is all the checkoff boards that we have, wheat, corn, potato, beef,