

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator McFarland, please.

SENATOR MCFARLAND: Yeah, thank you. This isn't something that is just thought of recently. This has been a suggestion by a number of people and, from my understanding, it has been suggested to Senator Warner and perhaps to Senator Withem, as well, by several people. And I have passed around an article that was taken from, I think it was the Lincoln Journal, February 26th. It's a public mind article that was written by Dr. Charles S. Wilson. He is a candidate for the Board of Regents. He is someone who has worked with the Commission on Higher Education for several years and he is author of many reports and many recommendations. I would like to just read from it with respect to the proposal of combining UN-L and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. He says, regardless of whatever reshuffling occurs in the coordination and governance of higher education in Nebraska, it is essential that the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Nebraska Medical Center remain together under a single governing body, excuse me, under a single governing board and a single chief administrative officer. This makes sense because these two institutions are the only ones with a broad statewide role and mission. They are the only institutions with major research capability and responsibility. They are the only doctoral level institutions. Research and doctoral programs are increasingly interdisciplinary efforts, and the linkage between these two campuses would be a benefit to both. The combined UN-L, UNMC comprehensive university would also be an institution comparable to its regional peers, the University of Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, etcetera. I might add, all of them have a board of trustees or a board that governs both the university and the medical centers in those particular states. Another important reason for keeping these two campuses together as a single institution is the political importance of Nebraska's comprehensive research university having a truly statewide presence. If UN-L and the Medical Center are separated and run by separate governing boards, and separate chief administrative officers, the University of Nebraska, as we know it, would no longer have any presence in Omaha whatsoever. The perception that there is a connection between Omaha and the Lincoln campus would even fade more than it already has. This is not an idea that has not been circulated. I have another letter that was circulated and I believe sent to some of the commission members, and it's dated the 28th of February, suggesting this very same