

March 12, 1990

LB 1141
LR 239

concern is right now being expressed about the focus of these changes and this amendment starts to bring attention to that. So I would rise in support of the amendment, mostly to call attention to the fact that the Med Center and the University of Lincoln have something in common and that they are statewide institutions with a statewide role and mission.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator McFarland, you're next, but may I take a moment, please, to recognize some students that are here as guests of Senator Schimek and Senator McFarland. In the south balcony, we have 84 fifth and sixth grade students from Prescott School, Unit O, and their teachers. Would you students and teachers stand so that we may recognize you? Thank you all for visiting us this morning. Senator McFarland, followed by Senator Weihing and Senator Hall.

SENATOR MCFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. President. I hope that this debate this morning will start to stimulate some discussion on these issues because my fear is that the majority of the body have not really followed this whole matter as closely as maybe we should. We, in the Education Committee, of course, had the hearing. We are generally familiar with all of the provisions and the testimony that occurred at that hearing, but it seems to me that a large number of this legislative body have just kind of conceded that the commission recommendation should be universally approved without any questions being asked. And I think we would make a big mistake if we do that. I have distributed a document that talks about the rationale for uniting the UN-L and the UNMC campuses into one major administrative unit, what has traditionally been the University of Nebraska, and I will read parts of it and I hope that you will take a look at it, because I think it raises a lot of issues and also clearly expresses a number of reasons why it is consistent to have UN-L and the Med Center under one board of trustees. It says that a number of Nebraskans who are knowledgeable about higher education in general, and about Nebraska's needs in particular, are supportive of the pending legislation, LR 239CA and LB 1141, but believe that the permanent bifurcation of the historic components of the University of Nebraska, that being the Lincoln campus and the medical campus in Omaha, would be a serious mistake. These individuals believe that Nebraska would benefit from having a single comprehensive research institution, one that would give it the strongest national profile; one that would facilitate interdisciplinary research, teaching and service to best meet