

recommendation that came from the board of regents, was not in the Appropriations Committee recommendations, but there was an end run around the process to provide that this would be done. I don't want to get into arguments on whether it's a good idea or a bad idea to build that project. I'm merely using it as an example that any kind of system that you create, there will be end runs, even if you do give blanket appropriations to the board of regents and tell them it is their discretion how they spend them. In practice before members of this body make those appropriations, there will be understandings as to how those dollars will be spent. My constituents are going to demand that of me, and I know people down here, particularly in this university community, and at all higher ed communities around the state think that the Legislature ought to provide unlimited funds, unlimited dollars for their unlimited desires and their unlimited wants. And any time that we set priorities, and we decide how the taxpayer dollars that we are extracting from our constituents should be spent, we're meddling in the system. But in the real world of the way politics operates, the way government operates, the way representative democracy operates, those constituents of mine want me to have some say over how their dollars are spent; that they don't want me just to throw money in bushel basketful's over to a board of regents and let them make the decisions on how those dollars will be spent. And in practice that is what the McFarland amendment would do. It would at least set up, in theory, a system where this Legislature is just abdicating its responsibility, totally, to have an impact on those priorities that need to be made in spending of higher education dollars. It's terribly inappropriate and it's also incredibly inappropriate to write this into the Constitution. Keep in mind, if this passes, and the voters approve it, this is the Constitution of the State of Nebraska. This is the Constitution that will be interpreted for the next 20, 30, 40, however many years it stands, by the Supreme Court, long after we're all gone from this body. This is...as Senator McFarland indicates, some of the other amendments he's had have been kind of nibbling around the edges of the proposal. But he's right, this is a very serious, very important change, and if it's adopted I think it would shift the balance of power between this body and higher education governing bodies in a totally disproportionate fashion, and I would urge you to vote against it.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Crosby, please, followed by Senator Langford.