

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator McFarland, please.

SENATOR McFARLAND: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I realize that a lot of people put a lot of work in on this particular project. Commission did "yaleman" work as far as trying to analyze the problems we have in higher education. And certainly I'm not going to say that there aren't problems in higher education. The question is will these solve the problems. Change just for change sake in itself is not a valid reason for enacting legislation. I have proposed what I thought were three fairly good amendments that would try to improve this particular bill. Ask that you combine the board of trustees at the UNL and the med center, because they are traditionally the higher education institutions that grant professional and doctoral degrees. That was rejected. I suggested that instead of having a mixture of appointed and elected board of regents that we just have a fully appointed board, just as has been recommended a few years ago when the study was done on this issue. That was rejected. I suggested that we have the money, appropriations directed not directly from the Legislature to the institutions but back to the board of regents. That was rejected. I don't want to be an obstructionist. I'm trying to improve the thing. But I don't think that this particular bill is going to be the answer. I appreciate Senator Moore calling me a spokesperson for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Actually, I'm very proud of that. I graduated from there and it's an honor to be that. I've often, sometimes, been accused of being a spokesperson for Wayne State, because my wife happened to graduate from there, and I suppose I take that as an honor, too. I take it as an honor that some people have said you're the one that is speaking for higher education in general by expressing your reservations. That's really my purpose. What is the entire system going to do? How is that going to affect us? My comments about certain people not wishing to offend the Legislature, or certain senators in this Legislature, are honest and correct. I mean that's what people have expressed to me. That is the perception that they are feeling, that they cannot express those views openly in public without having some kind of repercussion. That may not be and may very well not be, and I don't think it is, the intention of the senators in the Legislature, necessarily. But that, whether... what the intent of the legislative body is or not, the perception is that there will be repercussions. And it's not just coming from my constituency here in Lincoln. I am getting comments from people in the state colleges, representatives from