

educational needs of our students from all sections of our state. The proposed structure provides for a more stable relationship among the campuses to allow a smooth transition of Kearney State to university status without threatening either the existing university system or the remaining state colleges. Placing all seven four-year campuses under one coordinating board eliminates competing systems of government while creating a logical system of interdependence and accountability among all those campuses. At the same time, returning individual campus direction and operation back to the campus level enhances the opportunity for autonomy and innovation and responding to rapidly changing educational needs of all of the students involved, not to mention the long-standing recognition of the desirability of many who continually espouse the principle of local control. More importantly, the new Board of Regents created by this bill provides an opportunity for higher education in Nebraska to speak with a unified voice. The fact that one body will have authority to speak for all of the state's institutions of higher learning could add a new level of understanding, credibility and legitimacy to the budget requests and recommendations submitted to our Legislature. There have been those with vested interest in the current way of doing business who are quick to point out potential problems under the proposed system, talk about parochialism, turf battles, duplication of services, too much bureaucracy, intercampus rivalry, and the lack of planning and vision.

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR L. JOHNSON: Perhaps they are speaking more from their own experience and involvement in the present order of things and is a more apt description of what is and has been true. We have a right to hope for an end to this way of doing business. For the sake of preparing our students to meet exacting personal, professional and worldwide challenges in a new century, it is time for us to move forward. I urge your support of LB 239.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Crosby, please, followed by Senator Landis and Senator Bernard-Stevens. Senator Crosby.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Mr. President and members. Well, Scott Moore is not on the floor and I want to...oh, there he is. He is so cute, isn't he? You say such wonderful things, and, Senator McFarland, he didn't say you were the spokesperson, he