

whose interest is in the best possible higher education system in the state, and I think that can easily be accomplished, and I believe that the addition of the partisan aspect merely distracts from that goal of a statewide system of postsecondary education that can deliver the best quality possible.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Bernard-Stevens, please.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members of the body. On the Education Committee as this bill came out, I was one of those who opposed the partisanship even in the first place on the initial board. I, personally, agree with Senator Warner in opposing the Schimek amendment that even though there is politics within the education community and in the process, we certainly don't need to go any further to encourage it. And I always think it is kind of fascinating that if we would, in fact, put restrictions on the number of Republicans and Democrats, I am always amazed that the mentality out there that presupposes, I guess, that every Democrat in the State of Nebraska would vote against Governor Orr, and on the other side, that every Democrat would have voted for Governor Kerrey when he was running against former Governor Thone. And the fact of the matter, it is not that way. So I raise that point, and if you have a Democratic Governor, for example, I am sure that they could make a Republican appointee that was very favorable politically. It would be a very political appointment. If you are a Republican Governor, I am sure you can find a Democrat out there that was very favorable politically, might even have been very, very helpful, might have even contributed to a campaign. So the mere fact that we are going to make it equal partywise, and it is going to make it nonpolitical or going to equalize it somehow is beyond me. I don't think that is going to happen. Number two, it strikes me as very, very odd that we put...even want to put ourselves in a position of having a board vacancy come apart or become available and an appointment would take place or in the initial factor, in the initial time period an appointment take place, and we have an excellent person out there, one of the best people who is willing to serve, willing to participate and give of their expertise, but, lo and behold, they are from the wrong political party, and I think that is nonsense to make those type of criteria when we are talking about education, and I would strongly urge the voting against the Schimek amendment at this time.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. The Chair is pleased to note that