

Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, this is my last amendment. Based on discussions this morning, where there was an amendment adopted that said half the...or no more than half of the employees of this commission come from one political party, and there was some concern about that. Having thought about it, over lunch, and from a constitutional point that issue was raised as well as any infringement on civil rights, going back, reviewing that case, if there is any question, I'm not sure there would have been, but if there is, it is less likely with the two principal positions that this commission would have. And so what the amendment does, it strikes the half and half of the employees, but does require...would require that the election commissioner and its general counsel would be of opposite political registrations. And perhaps that's the better balance than attempting to do it with the entire employee staff, and would still generate a balance within the full-time staff, at the top at least, which ought to provide the oversight that political parties would have a concern with. I'd move adoption of that amendment.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Warner. Before I proceed with the speakers on the Warner amendment, I would like to introduce some guests of Senator Peterson. They are 25 eighth graders from Elkhorn Valley School at Tilden, Nebraska and their teacher. They're in the south balcony. Would you folks please stand and be welcomed by the Legislature. Thank you for being with us. The next speaker I have is Senator Lindsay. Senator Lindsay, did you wish to speak to the Warner amendment?

SENATOR LINDSAY: Thank you, Senator Baack. I'd yield my time to Senator Chizek, he apparently wanted to talk.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Chizek waives off. Senator Withem, did you wish to speak to the Warner amendment?

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes. This is one light back here that Senator Chizek did not push, so I will go ahead. I think when we were talking about Senator Warner's amendment, this morning, dealing with the staff being split, and then when we got to thinking about it's a fairly small staff anyway, I brought up the analogy of the local election offices where you have an election