

January 30, 1992 LB 245

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: This is the Withem-Bernard-Stevens amendment?

CLERK: Yes, sir.

SENATOR WITHEM: Okay, just wanted to make sure that Senator Bernard-Stevens got credit for the initial wording of this, because he did...he and his staff did spend a lot of time working on some of the details of the bill. And, first of all, LB 245, the main contents of LB 245 which will now probably be lost in the voluminous pages of the Wickersham amendment, LB 245 is a bill establishing an accountability system in public schools in Nebraska. The goal is to determine what we expect from our students, what we expect schools to be able to teach and train our young people to do as a result of their education, and then create a state accountability system of measuring whether students have met those particular levels of achievement. The amendment that Senators Bernard-Stevens...Senator Bernard-Stevens and I worked on...senators, Senator Bernard and Senator Stevens, I guess I said the plural there of senators as opposed to senator, makes some subtle changes in the bill that I think makes it a better bill. It does not substantively detract from the original process, or alter the original process. Let me go through the changes that are made here, and then maybe Senator Bernard-Stevens would like some of the close...the opening time to make some additional comments. One of the things it does, it changes the composition of the commission that is going to be doing this work. It makes it smaller, it was a 14-member commission, this lowers it to 11, and the members of the Government Committee, I point out we did this even without Senator Schrock proposing it to us. Senator Schrock has real concerns about size of commissions, and we are decreasing this one. We're taking one member of the Legislature, one member of the Department of Economics, Department of Economic Development, one from the Department of Education, one member from business, one member from agriculture. There's still a member of ag, and a member of business on this. Decreasing five of the original membership, and then we're adding one classroom teacher and one additional administrator. There was a concern, we heard from education that while there's not a problem having a commission that has educators and noneducators on it, that with only two educators on it, that this may be skewed too much in the