

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members, I rise to oppose the amendment Senator Schimek brings to us although I do appreciate the good faith that it's brought in. I think folks ought to take a look and read just what the amendment would allow the Auditor of Public Accounts to do. Although we talk about performance audits and financial audits and do believe that they are separate and distinct issues, the way this amendment reads, if you just read the first four lines, it says the Auditor of Public Accounts shall analyze the performance, management and accomplishments of the programs of all executive state officers, agency, boards, bureaus, commissions, associations, societies and libraries supported by the state, state institutions, the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska state colleges. You know, what are...what...I guess, Senator Schimek, on your time when you close or when you speak again, what does "and accomplishments of the programs", what is the definition of the accomplishments of the program and how does that fit under the auspices of the Auditor's offices? Who is deter...I mean, I would hate to have the Auditor determine what accomplishments might be, for example, in the Legislature and I know that's not defined here. But that does go, I think, beyond what even a performance audit might be defined as and I just would like to know what accomplishments of the program means in terms of the definition as it's offered in this amendment. The other thing is that Senator Schimek did broach the issue of the cost with regard to Senator Warner's proposal under LB 988. I know that the bill that she introduced, although a little broader in scope, that's out on General File was...had approximately \$180,000 price tag and I would guess that that would roll over into this amendment as well, which...and I would question whether that would even be enough to do the kinds of examinations that would be necessary under the amendment as it's drafted. But I...so I think that there is a...there is a healthy price tag that goes along with the amendment as it's offered. But I think that this is an extremely broad approach to the issue of performance audits or whether or not they ought to be allowed under the office of the State Auditor. I firmly do not believe that they should be. I remember not too long ago, I guess it was about six years ago, one fellow ran on a platform of being the last state auditor and just about pulled it off. I'm not so sure that he didn't have the right approach because, much like Senator Warner and Senator Wesely, I believe that the auditor's function is more of an oversight that belongs with the legislative branch, the branch that raises, procures