

or even have a staff person that can monitor the intent, keep track of committee hearings and keep track of floor debate and certainly the intents that we have with that. I think the danger is that too often the Legislature may create programs that aren't evaluated and this goes towards the integrity of the institution and the integrity of the Legislature to keep track of our own programs to do our own, I guess, evaluation of those sorts of things. And looking at the statute of what the public Auditor does do, I look at 84-304 that the Auditor really does do an examination of books, financial audits and so on. I think that that's fine. That's a good purpose and they should stay in that area and do those statutory required things. I thank them for their offer to be helpful to the Legislature in fact finding but I think it's far more appropriate for the Legislature to be its own program evaluator. I would resist and I think we should defeat the Schimek amendment and I would urge the adoption of 988. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Kristensen. Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. President, and members of the body, I just wanted to make a couple of comments actually on the line that Senator Wesely, Senator Hall and Senator Kristensen have made in opposition to the Schimek amendment but certainly rising in support of LB 988. And I guess I really have a difficult time when I look at what the Schimek amendment would do in regards to the legislative branch versus an executive branch. And one thing that came to mind, I was sitting back and thinking when I was reviewing the amendment Senator Schimek brought to us, I remember a meeting that was held over in one of the rooms close by the Chamber a year or so ago and a gentleman was speaking to a group about the performance audits. And one of the questions that was asked, in fact, I think it was Senator Lynch that asked the question, was is it a good policy to have an elected State Auditor be able to have the power to do the audits in a manner proposed by Senator Schimek in this amendment. And the answer came back very firmly that absolutely not, in his view, at least. Again, this was the gentleman's view and the discussion was that when we have an elected official doing the performance audit it causes problems as if the Legislature, itself, might...might use the system to an advantage or two. His recommendation is that there be some other type of entity that is relatively free of the politics, in this case Senator Warner and the group on the Executive Board