

January 5, 1996 LB 886

I don't want to get involved, personally involved in the discussion of some of the things that have occurred in the last few months. I would like to address this issue for my part as to what I think is appropriate long-term policy. And I believe that LB 886, as it currently is amended, is consistent with what has been done a number of other times and in other agencies, and has been the more recent trend, which was to give a greater level of responsibility to the office of Governor for the performance of some of these independent agencies. For those reasons I will not vote to support the proposed amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Warner. Senator Witek, your light is next.

SENATOR WITEK: Madam Chairman, members of the body, I rise in support of Senator Chambers' amendment to do away with Section 21. It mirrors the amendment that I put in yesterday to do away with Section 21 of this bill. I drove home yesterday still stunned, I guess, by the fact that something like this is occurring in the state of Nebraska, looking at the longer, future picture of what's going to be occurring at our Equal Opportunities Commission here in the state of Nebraska, understanding what the commission was established for back in the sixties and what it stands for, and what it means to a lot of different people, and what this Governor is seeking to do to this commission, essentially rendering it helpless or directly under.... I mean he's appointing an entire new commission, he's appointing a new director. He's molding it to his hand. It's such a huge power grab for one person to do and in such a potential...the potential of this committee or commission to wreak havoc, if someone would want to abuse it, is definitely there. And yet it seems that people on this floor don't want to talk about it, don't want to admit that it's occurring, don't want to really seriously discuss either doing away with it or fixing it, they think that this is the solution is to put it under a more political positioning. And I just don't see how that could possibly be logical to logical minds, and I assume that there are logical minds here, that anyone could not understand the potential for abuse that we are handing over to this Governor. I...I think that this is exactly what should be done, take out this whole section. If nothing else, take out this section of this bill because it allows the Governor to appoint an entire new board in the next 45 days and an entire new director to this division. This isn't the way it was set