

perspective. I remember when this issue came up when we were passing legislation coord...creating the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, I know Senator Warner and I carried some parts of that legislation, that there were those who wanted us to make sure that we had on that commission a representative of the community college, and a representative of the university, and a representative of the state colleges, and a representative of the independents, and then a representative from Kearney, and a representative of Omaha, and a representative of Lincoln, and we said in the middle of that debate or in the middle of those discussions, hold on a second, the problem with postsecondary education is that everybody deals with it as a turf issue, and deals with their own particular perspective and nobody was looking at the broad picture. And so we ended up creating a coordinating commission with nobody having their feet on any particular turf of higher education, at least theoretically. I think there is probably some individuals on there who have kind of defined themselves, but, in general, it's a group of Nebraskans that are to look at higher education in general, and have they done a good job or done a bad job, I think that's kind of irrelevant. I think in the balance that they have done a good job. I share that with you, though, because I think we need this same sort of thinking to apply here in this particular case. If we are going to have a partnership council whose function it is to obtain community perspective and participation, to facilitate communication, and to serve as a link to community groups, I don't think we want a group of ten individuals there whose sole duty is to protect a given piece of turf. Remember, those of you who've seen the presentation with the various silos, with the various programs, we have, you know, this program for the juveniles, we have this program for mental health, we have this program for veterans affairs, we have this program for the elderly, we are trying to get away from that. We're trying to make this an agency that will cross over all of these different populations. I think it would be a mistake to create a commission that had each of those preexisting groups specifically designated by name and by title. For that reason, I'm not going to be supporting the amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Bernard-Stevens. Senator Bernard-Stevens. Senator Vrtiska.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. I just want to speak for a moment to the issue of the