

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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February 2, 2000 LB 510

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Sheriff Schmitt. Only to say this, when he first started talking, I thought that was Johnny Cash and I was going to request that he sing...well, okay, but thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Those wishing to speak on the advancement of LB 510 are Senators Tyson, Smith, Janssen, Schimek, Crosby, and Senator Beutler. Senator Tyson, on the advancement of LB 510.

SENATOR TYSON: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I rise, this shouldn't come as a big surprise, in opposition to Senator Chambers' bill, LB 510. I think that to make any office, any office, a nonpartisan election matter removes the process that winnows out candidates, affords candidates a structure within which to operate, and to remove the party designation removes an identifier. It's an identifier of a philosophy. It is a identifier of a grouping. In other words, who are your fellow supporters? Who is it you associate with politically or philosophically? And most importantly it hides an identity. A political party, to be a political party, has to stand for something. It has to have a philosophy. As a factual matter, it has to have a philosophy that a great number of people, or a large number of people can identify with. It has to have a series of economic beliefs. And it has to have the support of like-minded people who will in standing for election and in standing for a desire to serve are identified by those beliefs, those philosophies. If you turn the selection of an Attorney General into a nonpartisan basis, why don't you just turn it over to a computer? Of course, then you would have the philosophy of the computer programmer who is, again, unidentifiable. Now I think that we should look upon this, and I don't look upon my duty here as one to be kind to Senator Chambers, because Senator Chambers sometimes is not kind to me. That had to be said. But I think if you will look upon this in a very dispassionate manner, you will come to the conclusion political parties do serve a purpose, an attorney general does have a political philosophy, and it does color his work. It colors the work of everyone of us. Now it has been said that it is not important that we are nonpartisan or partisan in this Legislature, but the identifier has been mentioned this morning. Some of us are Republicans of various shades and hues. Some of