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FLOOR DEBATE

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SENATOR SCHROCK: No, there has not been one, and I've not been aware of one. I don't think there has been one.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Senator Schrock. Members of the Legislature, I have nothing against the gentleman whose name is being presented. I'm not going to vote against it, against the name, but a point has to be reached when recognition is made of the fact that more than 50 percent of the population in this state is female. I know that number is not represented on the floor of the Legislature. It's not represented anywhere in this society where anything of consequence is going on. I think by ignoring women, and when we're dealing with other areas where those who have not reached womanhood but are girls, by ignoring women and girls a pool of talent is completely ignored and not tapped into. A couple of years ago I was voting against every nomination, practically speaking, that was sent over here by the Governor, because women were not being nominated to various positions. I pointed out that the argument which was given to justify this was not acceptable to me. The argument in many cases was that the appointment simply was a reappointment. It was not a new person being brought on. And I used that opportunity to explain the meaning of institutional discrimination. It's built into the system, takes on a life of its own, and it need not be consciously and deliberately invoked because the work has been done. It just happened that the ones who had been appointed in the first instance, and therefore were being reappointed, were males. Eventually a point was reached when the Chairpersons of various committees would be tendering an appointment to us of a woman or a member of a minority group, special note of that fact would be taken by the Chair and directed, the Chair of that committee, and directed to me so I would be aware. It should not be necessary for me to stand on this floor and raise this issue and raise it again and again and again. There are other people on the floor with a voice. I would hate to think that nobody is conscious of this situation, and I would hate to think that those who are conscious of it are so fearful of giving offense that they will not even mention it. But because I feel a responsibility as an elected official and a state senator, I feel a responsibility to deal with issues that relate to the welfare and interest of the citizens...