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March 10, 2003 LB 688

Senator Chambers to the Business and Labor Committee amendment to LB 688. Open for discussion, Senator Chambers, followed by Senators Thompson, Bromm, Friend, Landis, Engel. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, if I pass for now, that will not count against my times to speak, will it?

SENATOR CUDABACK: No, that was Senator Aguilar's.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay, and I am going to pass for now.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you. Senator Thompson.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. One of the advantages of sitting next to Senator Chambers on the floor is we do get a chance to talk about bills ahead of time, so he probably knows my concern when I rise here. You know when we award academic scholarships to the university, we don't say to students, well, you have to pick a certain major because that might enhance the ability of the university to have you as a leading person in an area that earns a lot of money, and that would be good for the university. We don't put any strings on our academic scholarships. And one concern I have about this policy that we're being asked to enact today is that it only deals with the sport of football. And I recognize that Senator Chambers wants to draw the NCAA's attention to this issue, and I understand that. But we have a larger policy issue in my view when we single out a stipend for a single sport, and if we only reward those sports that ever generate money in a significant way. So when the day comes that baseball is paying its own way, and maybe it is, I'm not really sure, but Nebraska has had some outstanding baseball teams, and volleyball teams, and soccer teams, and other sport teams, is it only then would we consider that those athletes work hard, train hard and should be rewarded with a stipend, who may be in the same economic and financial circumstances as a football player? And I'm old enough to remember life before Title IV. My husband was a teacher when we were married and he was a coach and, eventually, went into officiating. And somewhere along the line when he was teaching at Papillion Junior High he started getting up about