

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

April 24, 2003      LB 540

SENATOR ENGEL:      Mr. President, members of the body, sorry I wasn't here to listen to most of this debate. So I'm just assuming that certain things have been said, as far as the valuable resources community colleges are to our state and our communities, and especially the services they're affording to people in this particular...in these economic times, because more and more people are utilizing these community colleges during these periods of time than they are in the good times, because they're trying to retrain for other jobs when they're losing their jobs they're at right now. And another thing about Northeast Community College, they do have a reciprocity agreement with the Western Iowa Tech College in...Community College in Sioux City, Iowa, where they charge in-state tuition for anyone from Iowa who goes over there. And then, of course, then people clear up in northeast Nebraska, they can do the same there. And they do share different courses. So it's very valuable to us up in our particular area. And of course, you kind of probably wonder why, serving on Appropriations Committee, why I'd even support something like this. Well, to me it's a situation that, when they first approached me last summer, I talked to them. I said, this is something you're going to have to sell, you're going to have to sell the people in northeast Nebraska, that they are willing to pay more in property taxes to support this college. They felt that that job could be done, I said, because it is a selling job. But as far as selling me, that's one thing, but selling the people that this is what they want. And of course, they have committed themselves to do that. They've committed themselves to sell it. And I think that as far as Northeast Community College, how it is utilized up in our area, I think it can be sold. I think they can get the job done. The thing is...but what probably brought it to the fore more, for me, than anything else, is it's a fairness issue, because...as far as bringing it into sync with the other community colleges in the state of Nebraska. So that's probably more for me than anything else is bringing all these community colleges onto the level playing field. So thank you. With that, I would offer my...rest of my time to Senator Tyson if he wants it. Otherwise I'll return it to the Chair.

SENATOR CUDABACK:      Senator Tyson.