

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

April 15, 2004

It is exclusive in the sense that the Flat Earth Society is exclusive. Anybody can join, but most people choose not to. Or, come to think of it, David, it is exclusive in the sense that the group of people attending the State Fair is exclusive. There have been three wings in this caucus: the long-established dedicated wing, the indecisive wing, and, as it turns out, the temporary wing. Early on, I saw a problem with attendance at caucus meetings. My solution was to change the quorum rule to a number consistent with our spirit of independence--one. My view is that since the rule change, most votes were one to one. With the arrival of Chip, the usual outcome has been one to one to one. Chip and I served together on the Education Committee for the past four years; the last two he has been Vice Chair. I know that during your service in the Legislature you have been at times nearly overcome with concern about committee members who uncritically accept the position of the majority of the committee members on an issue. I'm here to tell you that having Chip Maxwell on your committee all but eliminates that concern. And for those of you who fear uncritical acceptance of legislative and committee procedures, not to worry. The need for new thinking should have been obvious to all of us. Who knows how long we would have labored in the rut of having bills and resolutions drafted at Bill Drafters, and ignored the alternatives of placing an ad in the Omaha World-Herald or hosting a talk radio program. And why shouldn't each member of a committee conduct his or own schedule...his or her own schedule of interim hearings? Chip, you may have noticed that during some tense moments at Exec Sessions I have occasionally received your comments with a smile. I must tell you that immediately preceding the smile was this thought: Tyson could have been on the committee. (Laughter) Chip will make a significant contribution in his career in public office. I believe this because I believe in our system. I wouldn't believe in our system if I thought someone as dedicated and talented as Chip Maxwell would be denied. He is bright and articulate and a great writer. He also has a great sense of humor. Just consider his school finance routine. But no matter how successful Chip becomes in his public career, his achievement will likely pale in comparison to the contribution he is making in his personal life. I hope you've had a chance to meet his wife Pam and their