

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

April 4, 2005

LB 351

79 of 93 Nebraska counties. The Asian population increased 23 percent, and the African-American population increased 3.6 percent, and that was after increases between the 1990 and 2000 Census that also saw increases in the minority population in Nebraska. Given this growing minority population in Nebraska, it makes sense to have them represented on the EQC in order to give them input into how the standards are set for air, water, and siting issues in their communities. It makes even more sense when environmental justice issues are factored in, particularly given the impact of the number, location, and kinds of facilities which are sited in minority and low-income neighborhoods and communities. These changes do not delete any of the current industry-related member seats on the council, but only provide an opportunity for new voices to be heard. I believe this new proposal is a good faith effort to strike a negotiated compromise in the makeup of the body which sets environmental standards for all Nebraskans. I did pass out to you, that should be on your desk, a copy of the current membership on the EQC, as well as the proposed change to that. The bill, as introduced, makes several changes. The committee amendment will modify that. And my handout to you reflects the committee changes, which Senator Schrock will identify when we get to the committee amendment. You can see on the handout that we are leaving in place, as I stated, all of the current membership. You'll also see that the makeup is composed of eight regulated industry representatives and three additional professional specialists, all of whom are or have the potential of being regulatees, as do the government representatives. This proposal has been one that I have brought before the committee in the past, have introduced amendments and legislation, and at this point I feel comfortable with what the committee amendment will do and will support that. With that, Mr. President, I am open to any questions when we get to that point. Thank you. And I do support the committee amendment.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Preister. You've heard the opening on LB 351. Senator Schrock, as Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, you're recognized to open on committee amendments.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I