

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, Senator Newell indicated that these amendments came about after discussions with Senator Hoagland, Senator Newell and a number of other people who have for a good number of years been interested in the political accountability and disclosure commission and I think my basic purpose for introducing the bill is still retained and that being that some geographic representation is achieved through this bill. Let me say, Senator Marsh, that I personally resent the insinuation that people who are registered as independents are politically naive or not as knowledgeable about political matters as those of you who are wise enough to register as a republican or as a democrat. I think Senator Chambers is probably one of the most politically knowledgeable people in the Legislature. He understands issues. He speaks eloquently on issues. Now I don't do quite as good as he does but I think I understand a few of the issues that are important to my district and I really think it is an insult to those people who choose to register as independents for one reason or another, to say that they are not politically knowledgeable. Now, Senator Marsh, a good number of young people especially are registering as independents politically for a good number of reasons and part of it may be some dissatisfaction with some of the party platforms and other things. Now I am not expressing dissatisfaction here today but what I am saying is I think it is an insult to those people. The comments that you have made are wrong. Now one thing I do object to and one reason I requested that an independent be put on this commission is a trend that I see in this country which I do not like and that is the trend to simply institutionalize the Republican and the Democratic Party whether they are right or whether they are wrong and through campaign financing and a number of other things say, these are the parties we have and whether their policies represent what the people want or not, we are going to make sure that those parties stay in existence through campaign financing and a number of other things. Now I don't think it is wrong to have that one out of nine people on this commission to have a point of view that is a little bit different. Now maybe some people are opposed to points of view that aren't theirs. Well I think this commission should have some divergent points of view and I think people who are registered as independents, and those numbers are growing, should have some protection and I don't think the Political Accountability and Disclosure Commission should simply be a means to protect republicans and democrats and I think this adds some accountability to the commission.