

May 5, 1981

LB 209

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Mr. President and colleagues, let me just make a couple of brief remarks. As I indicated before, I think Senator Kosh's original concept to change the primary for state elections from May back to September is an excellent one and what I would like to do is clean this bill up so we can deal only with that issue and none other. Now I have another amendment up that would take out all the provisions of this bill relating to the special presidential primary which is supposed to be costly and so forth and if we can keep the bill alive why then we can strip those provisions out as well. Now in terms of the merits of this amendment, as I indicated earlier we have seen a long erosion of the powers of the political parties nationwide as well as in the State of Nebraska. Now there is nothing to prevent an independent or anyone else for that matter from registering to vote and designating a party affiliation. Somebody who has registered as an independent now can anytime he or she wants register as a republican or a democrat and that way acquire the right to vote in the primary of the Republican Party or the Democratic Party but if an independent has failed to do that, I don't have any sympathy for the fact that they are then excluded from voting in the primary of that particular...of either party because again, I think the people that have registered as republicans and the people that have registered as democrats ought to have the right to select who their candidates and who their leaders are going to be. I don't think we should have people shifting over at the last minute to select a candidate for a particular party, perhaps intentionally selecting the weaker candidate as the candidate of the other party and prevail. So, again, I think that the open primary system which has been adopted in very few states in this country, no more than four or five that I know of, is basically not a good concept. It tends to contribute again to the weakening of the political parties that we have been seeing over the last several decades. In response to Senator Wickers' argument there is nothing whatsoever to prevent any adult in this state eighteen years or older who is a resident from registering to vote and affiliating himself with one party or another. Then he can vote in that party's primary but until he is willing to do that I don't think he should be entitled to. So I ask for your support of this amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CLARK: All those in favor of the Hoagland amendment vote aye. All those opposed vote nay. Voting no.

CLERK: Senator Clark voting no.

SENATOR CLARK: Have you all voted? Once more, have you all voted? Record the vote.