

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Madam Chair, and members, I appreciate very much Senator Landis and Senator Ashford bringing this amendment if for no other reason than we could again talk about this issue because I do think that the public needs to understand what...why the bill came about. And I thank Senator Landis for giving us the history because it did start back in like '83 or whatever over one person's phone bills. And Senator Warner has said some things that I think are very telling, and when the public hops onto an issue like that, all of the personal lives of senators are sort of ignored and that's not right either. For instance, Senator Ashford should have been able to call his mother. That still horrifies me that he had to pay back some phone calls when his mom was dying. That's not right. And Senator Hall's description of our present Auditor is right on the mark, he's a political animal. He wants power and he has found that way to have some power with this particular issue. I don't think he understands his job description. I've tried twice now. I've introduced a bill to try to change the thrust and the duties and so on of a public Auditor and/or Treasurer and make it into one office called the Comptroller, and that Comptroller would have some qualifications. The Auditor, indeed, should be a CPA, a certified public accountant. There are audit practices that I am not sure are being followed in our public Auditor's office. But aside from all of that, I don't feel like I have any halo around my head because I voted against the bill on the first time around. I got a lot of thank yous from people but, oddly enough, I did not get a thank you from the public Auditor. You would have thought he might have called me or something and said, well, thanks a lot. No, no call. But the other thing, the two things that he does, since we're talking about the person because I said earlier, it's very difficult to separate the personality from the issue because he's made his personality an issue. And one of the things he does and did originally, he would write a letter to the Chair of the Executive Board and give it to the press first. That's not very gentlemanly, to say the least. If he would have gone to the Executive Board and tried to work with them, but that wasn't done. The third thing, he makes up his mind ahead of time that there is abuse. How does he know? I don't know. I don't know who is telling him that there is abuse, but somebody maybe is. But the last thing, in particular, he does some things and perhaps right now I don't think that, as an Auditor, that that office is addressing all the audit problems in the State of Nebraska that need to be done. They are ignoring some audits. They are doing other audits and I think we have come to a point