

information with regard to the backgrounds that some of our minority students come from. I think we have to be careful. These are Senator Hall's quotes, the same race or ethnic group, where they grew up, or how they were educated. And then Dr. Don Benning came down and testified, and he mentions the fact that our state is rich in diversity with citizens of German, English, African-American, Native American, Asian, Hispanic as well as a multitude of other ethnic racial groups. And with the testimony that was concerned with minority population, and I received a letter from Mr. Rashad Byndon from the United Catholic Social Services, and he says that one thing with 250, we need to be careful about is that if students are going to enjoy and have effective learning in the classroom, their contact with educators from other racial groups should be positive. And so that's all I'm asking the body to do is to be careful about the words, and I guess that comes from having the background of an English teacher, and for that I am sorry, but I just feel that we need to be very careful here, and I would just ask the body to pass these amendments, to accept them, to pass them on. It will not hurt the intent of the bill. In fact, as I truly believe and the members of the Urban League, with whom I've visited, truly believe as well, that it will just simply define down the bill and make it really what they sought in the first place, and that is all I have.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you, Senator Beck. Discussion on the Beck amendment, Senator Withem, followed by Senators Hall, Bernard-Stevens, and Nelson.

SENATOR WITHEM: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, the term in the bill was a relatively major subissue over this particular bill. We had the bill originally drafted using the word subgroup. When that was pointed out to us, we recognized that probably our bill drafting left a lot to be desired in terms of sensitivity to people that are not part of our white Anglo-Saxon culture here. The committee adopted the word "pluralistic". The debate now is whether we use the word "pluralism" or whether we use the word "ethnic and racial". Originally, I didn't think it made a whole lot of difference. I may have even said that on the floor in General File, but some comments that were made in debate on General File, primarily those from Senator LaVon Crosby, to be very frank, led me to believe that probably the word pluralism that is in the bill now is a more appropriate term. Let me tell you why I think that is, a couple of reasons why. First of all, some people have misread the intent of this