

SENATOR HALL: ...to deal with this issue. So I mean I would just like to reemphasize the fact that this deals with the education of our teachers, doesn't deal with anything that is going to take place in the classroom, but it gives them the tools to handle problems that will come up in this area and I think that I fully appreciate Senator Beck's concern, but I think it is misconceived and I would urge the body to reject the Beck amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Bernard-Stevens, additional discussion on the Beck amendment.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Just very briefly, Mr. President, I, too, would rise in opposition though I understand the positive intent and nature of Senator Beck's amendment. I was just going to page 2 and 3 actually of the green copy that has not been changed by the committee amendments that were agreed to earlier to try to stress again that the intent of the bill is not to teach substantive content but rather skills in dealing with particular problems. And I'd draw anyone's attention, if they'd care, on the areas that needs to be looked at to make sure that these topics are covered within courses taught within the institutions of higher learning. It would be an awareness and understanding of values, of lifestyles, an awareness of that; an ability to recognize and deal with biases; the ability to translate knowledge into attitudes, skills, and techniques; the ability to recognize the ways of biases; and respect the human dignity. We are teaching teachers, if you wish, the skills needed in order to help students deal with and they, themselves, deal with human relations, and that is the intent, and I think others within the state have misinterpreted the intent to the bill thinking that we are going to get in particular content and that is not the nature of the bill nor the intent of the bill. So upon that, I would very kindly disagree with the amendment offered by Senator Beck. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Nelson, please.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I will make this very brief. I support Senator Beck. I visited with Senator Hall about this. I believe the day the bill came up on the floor before, he was absent, so we didn't get time. Senator Beck has a very good point. We are not trying to get into various religious aspects. When you open up that door, you again open up an area of very different opinions and so on.