

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Chambers, on the advancement of the bill.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, I move that LB 340 be advanced to E & R for Engrossment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Any discussion on the advancement of the bill? Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, this has been a difficult process but actually it has probably helped us arrive at what we have in LB 340. Unfortunately, these amendments, this coming together of our differences and making sure that we have the right language is done at great expense and difficulty on the floor when it could have been done, it seems to me, off the floor with a much better and more well-thought-out attention to each and every word of the bill but, ultimately, 340 now is a statement of policy in which we renounce our claims to the skeletal remains of any person that the state now holds, whether they are white or nonwhite, and that we are going to treat skeletal remains and bare artifacts the same without regard to race or ethnic origin, that we are going to solve the perspective problems created in this kind of situation by a certain set of rules that allow for the keeping of a skeletal remain or a burial good for a period of study, and then to the returning of those goods to interested linear descendants. It constitutes a series of definitions which I think are very tightly drawn to make sure the skeletal remains will go back to an appropriate claiming party where there is evidence to support the knowledge as to what kind of skeletal remain we are speaking of. There is a tight definition on the return of burial goods which must be linked to a skeletal remain, which is well and scientifically shown to be of a tribe or lineal descent of the requesting party. There is a dispute resolution mechanism, and there is a period of study allowed for bones which we now have, and burial artifacts we now have in our possession, which we intend to return in a year's time. Senator Warner has a motion on the A bill, I believe, to place some money with the State Historical Society as a way of doing the necessary research. When that moment comes, I intend to support that amendment. That, I think, is an essential element here, to use this one-year period wisely, to do the study which we have been able to do for the last 50 years but have, basically, not done. It gives us a period of time and the means to do the scientific study which we have been putting off heretofore. In