

SENATOR HALL: I think that there is potential there, there is potential for a shift.

SENATOR NELSON: ...exactly, that potential is what the basis of the bill is?

SENATOR HALL: Sure. But, no, that is not the basis of the bill. The basis of the bill is clarify what is currently in statute and that's all it does and the AG's opinion states that.

SENATOR NELSON: Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Schellpeper, please.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you, Mr. President and members, I would have a question of Senator Withem.

PRESIDENT: Senator Withem, please.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Senator Withem, in your opinion, is there ever going to be a time that you could see when the people of Nebraska are going to realize, although how unpopular, that we have probably too many colleges to fund?

SENATOR WITHEM: Yeah, Senator Schellpeper, thank you for the question. Also thank you for sharing it with me about ten seconds before you asked it so I could get a little time to think about my response. I think part of the resource debates that we have on the floor of this Legislature over higher ed are probably a basis of that fact, and I think your question, I think that there are some. I think we lost a couple of private institutions last year, did have to close down because they just don't have the student base coming into them with...in order to keep open. It's my hope that we as a Legislature will be taking a very critical look at our higher education system in our state. You'll get an opportunity, maybe as early as tomorrow when LB 247 comes up, to begin addressing some of those issues. I think we need to look very seriously at them. We have difficulty though as a Legislature in dealing with those. We have difficulties across the state in dealing with those. Last year we had a recommendation from the Board of Regents that we shrink the University of Nebraska program by eliminating the program at Curtis, and we as a Legislature chose not to honor that request. We, instead, funded that particular program. So