

with this amendment is we're making the commission a little leaner and meaner, I think, and, hopefully, not too much of an emphasis on the meaner but maybe we do need a little meaner look at this, that instead of it being a commission with wide range of representation leading the study, what we're doing with this amendment is we're making a recognition that if anybody is going to have to act to change things, it's going to be the Legislature and that this really should be a legislative directed committee. So the committee is...the study will be under the direction of the Legislative Council. It will not be a new free-standing, free-floating sort of entity that will be doing the study. Secondly, the membership is a smaller membership. If the purpose of this committee is primarily to put a broad focus on the study and then to contract with an entity to do the study, we can do it with a smaller group of people. We are also, frankly, on the people that are actually doing the contracting, we are eliminating any sector representation. The committee that oversees the study will be two legislators chosen by the Exec Board, two public members of the Coordinating Commission of Higher Education and an individual to be appointed by the Governor. I had an earlier version of the bill, that person appointed by the Governor would come from the administrative branch. That no longer is the case. The Governor can choose whoever she happens to choose. This also ties in the Coordinating Commission and probably is not appropriate to do a study on higher education without bringing the Coordinating Commission in. It makes recognition of the need to include other individuals, the experts in higher ed in an advisory capacity but I think it makes it clear that they will not be the only...that they will not be participating in the decision making. Part of the problems in the past has been that the sectors get together and make turf protection types of recommendations. Secondly, I was concerned about the time line of the study, that at the hearing I got a lot of support for 247 but, to be real blunt with you, I was concerned about some of that support that I was getting because there are people who were coming in on 160, the bill to transfer Kearney, and were saying, we support 247 instead and I was questioning whether it was a legitimate sort of support or whether it was kind of the age-old type of let's study this issue rather than acting sort of thing. So we're speeding up the time line. It was previously a two-year study. It's still a two-year study with this amendment but there is an interim report asking the contractor to come back with recommendations that will require constitutional changes prior to the next legislative session.