

which toe we put in first, and whether the water is the right temperature today, whether tomorrow might not be the better day to do it; that we decide, yes, we want to get on the train and go to Denver, but we sit and argue about what the train schedule says, sitting at the station, while the train is leaving. I think we need, as a Legis...we have an obligation as a Legislature to put a better focus on what we do with higher education. I believe that answering the very real and legitimate concerns of the people at Kearney State is a part of that. If you don't, if you don't want to focus on Kearney, then you ought to vote for this amendment, and then get Kearney out of the bill and then get on and talk about what the bill deals with. The bill deals with a study of higher education. If you think looking at the very specific issues that Kearney State brings up are a part of the issue that has to be addressed, then you ought to vote against this amendment. I'm going to urge you to vote against this amendment. What I'm doing is offering the folks that when they see the word "Kearney" in there get nervous because, oh, my gosh, if we put Kearney into the system it might mean that there will be \$10.53 now spent in Lincoln that may not be spent there and, for gosh sakes, we can't allow that to happen. Give those people an opportunity for an up or down vote on whether you think we ought to bury our heads, as the Legislature, on the Kearney issue and not even address it specifically. If you believe that, then vote in this case. If you believe you want to go a couple of steps further with the Kearney issue, then vote against this amendment and maybe vote for some of the amendments that are coming up in the future. What I'm doing is giving an opportunity to cleanse your souls and to cleanse this bill, if that is your desire, from any reference to the Kearney issue.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Scofield, please. Senator Wesely, followed by Senator Crosby.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President. I'll save most of my comments for closing. Senator Withem makes an offer, I'll take it. But I'll just first off say that we're not attempting to bury our heads here, as Senator Withem talks about. That's not the case at all. We're trying to talk about a level playing field so that we consider the issue of Kearney in the context of other issues, not separate it out, not put above all other issues, but on a level playing field, not buried, but not elevated either. That's really the key question. You have to look at a number of different issues, they all tie together.