

this since they are the consumer of higher education services, obviously. So I think we would greatly enhance the vision and the wisdom of this study by expanding the size of this group and involving people who are not necessarily concerned about the preservation or growth of any particular institution, but want to represent the public at large views. And I would commend Senator Withem, frankly, for the way he designed an amendment that I have been less than enthusiastic about, but, frankly, I think one of the good things he did is he took it out of the control of people who have a vested interest in that as any entity of higher education, but I think if we expand this in the ways I have suggested, that will assure that we do a better job of looking at the public interest and statewide needs, and that we don't be so narrow that people don't feel a sense of ownership of whatever it is we produce. With that explanation, I would ask you to accept that amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the Scofield amendment? Senator Withem, followed by Senator Abboud.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I think Senator Scofield did an adequate job of explaining the amendment. I don't necessarily think it is needed, necessarily. The function of the commission is to contract and oversee the work of a contractor. Five people can do that as well as 13. I guess, on the other hand, there is no problem with expanding the number of people that are on the commission. There is absolutely nothing magic about the number "five, two, two, and one". The numbers that Senator Scofield have, if it gives more comfort to the Legislature that we are including more people, I'd probably have no serious objection to it. I think she did point out that it really does not...there is a substantive change from the way the bill was originally written to the way it is currently written with the adoption of the previous amendment. We are no longer asking the representatives of the institutions to supervise a study that studies themselves. So we have changed that. The Scofield amendment does not change that. I guess that is the...that is probably the one item in this whole commission makeup that I feel a very strong sense that we should not change. If the greater number of people on the commission, both from the Legislature and from the public at large, is something this body feels comfortable doing, and would feel more comfortable with that approach than the way it is currently written, I would have no objection to doing that.