

by Senator Moore that we killed immediately, and we also heard LB 160, which was the bill by Senators Langford, Warner, and Kristensen, that would have effectuated the change of Kearney State into the system, into the university system. It is my position, I had a very difficult time with 160, I genuinely did, because I think the people made an excellent case that Kearney State has outgrown the state college system and belongs as part of our university system. Had no problem with that in isolation. What my concerns are and were and are is that we have many broader things we need to do in the area of higher education. I have outlined some of those thoughts in previous bills, outlined some of those thoughts in earlier debate on 247, things that I think are essential that we need to do in higher education. We need to do a better job of coordinating, of focusing, of developing a sense of vision, of working together, and that if we would simply have advanced 160, that the debate then on higher education in a more worldly view just would not have taken place at all. It would just have been a debate over who is helped and who is hurt by transfer of this one institution into another set of institutions. So we, as a committee, chose not to advance LB 160, although probably there were a majority of people on the committee that felt that that was...that changing Kearney was the right thing to do, for fear that merely doing Kearney would have said...that we would have then washed our hands, gone home, and said, well, we have taken care of higher education needs. We felt that this approach in 247 that looks at the broader problems of higher ed was a better approach, but because we, as a committee, did not advance 160 because we did not want to view...look at Kearney in isolation, I think we owe it to the sponsors of 160 to give them a fair shot to get their ideas advanced onto 247, recognizing as the sponsor of 247, have a relatively innocuous bill there that this may put increased baggage on, I am willing to take that risk because I think the message that these senators have to bring is important enough that it needs to be considered by the full Legislature. So I am going to support and I have been careful to use primarily procedural arguments in this statement and I am going to vote very supportive of the suspension of the rules, and I would urge even people that may not be comfortable, 100 percent comfortable, on the actual transfer of the Kearney issue, to vote to suspend the rules so that we can consider it. I think we will then be considering it in its proper spot as part of the debate on what this Legislature needs to do with all of higher education, not just the institution of Kearney, but I think they deserve their fair shot here, and I urge you to