

to have you. Further discussion, Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I'm tempted to take you up on your request to call the question, Senator Landis, but I think I'd like to...I'd like to have two or three more questions answered if we could. First of all, clarification then on the committee amendments. I was kind of looking forward to the debate this morning, assuming that we would have a strong defense of the committee amendments as to why we should pay for the other institutions and not for Commonwealth versus those, and we have had very strong arguments, very good arguments on the other side as to why Commonwealth should be included. But what you're saying basically, it wasn't a split in the committee on whether you ought to include Commonwealth or whether you shouldn't, it was basically, you know, three positions. One, we ought to pay everybody; the other, we shouldn't pay anybody; and then a small minority on the committee that was a swing that could support it if Commonwealth were excluded. So there isn't necessarily a big rationale in the committee for excluding Commonwealth. It was basically one member who was a swing vote. Is that fair characterization?

SENATOR LANDIS: Yup.

SENATOR WITHEM: And beings that member is not here, and I'm not being critical for him not being here, that's partially the reason we haven't heard the strong defense of the committee amendments. If the committee amendments are defeated, what will the fiscal note of the bill be? I see \$40 million in the book. Is that approximately what it will cost us?

SENATOR LANDIS: That's what is in the book and that includes interest. The fiscal note drops down by half at least and a little bit more.

SENATOR WITHEM: If you don't include interest or...

SENATOR LANDIS: No. If you...

SENATOR WITHEM: If you adopt the committee amendments...

SENATOR LANDIS: If you adopt the committee amendments, you're going to drop out, I'd say, at least 50 percent of the cost of the bill.