

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Wesely, then followed by Senator Schmit and Senator Scofield.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. I think, Mr. President, members, I think the discussion has been very good and very upbeat and positive in tone and I hope we can continue that way. This is a very important issue. I think alternatives need to be considered and one of the interesting points, as Senator Langford talked about, was how Kearney was lumped with Creighton and UN-O and it just got me to thinking that maybe there is another way to deal with this reorganization question. Maybe we could put UN-O under the board of trustees and change the concept that we have as far as the state colleges go. And there are a lot of other options and ideas out there, wild as they may seem, but as we start to look at this issue and open up our eyes, I don't think we ought to disregard exactly how we're trying to proceed. For, in fact, if Kearney is a regional college, maybe university under definition as the other three are, and UN-O is a regional university, you know there is some compatibility there in a way that we ought to consider and I'm just throwing that out as one other idea that we have yet to discuss or consider. And that is why I think a study first is why we need to proceed and I also think the study first is there because following this amendment there will be another amendment, if I fail on this one which I do anticipate, to have all of the state colleges brought under the university because, frankly, I still have trouble, I still have yet to differentiate other than size why Kearney is so different than all the other state colleges. And if we're going to bring and coordinate and plan together, then we ought to do it with everybody and, obviously, I don't know that we can do that. But that is what was recommended under another study, the twenty-first century study just five years ago, something like five years ago, and it recommended that all the state colleges come under the board of regents and then that the board of regents be appointed, not elected. And it's on this point that I want to raise this issue, that the whole question here, you know, we had some accusations of parochialism and division and regionalism, and truly that concerns us all. This is a district elected group of legislators. We represent our areas of the state. We try to look at the state in general, but we also have to consider our own districts and what impacts legislation have on them. But I think I'm keeping an open mind and looking at the state in general, also recognizing my own district and city's concerns.