

been adopted. One of them is that they wanted to be assured that the study we were doing was a meaningful study, that we were not just passing a bill to add Kearney because that's what we wanted to do, and glossing it in a study afterwards to put a little frosting on it, to hide what it is we're doing. That was my characterization of what I thought their concern might have been, not necessarily the way they stated it. And they wanted some assurance that we, the Legislature, were serious about the study component of it. And this amendment that Senator Wehrbein is bringing us, on the surface the language of it may not bring a substantive change in the bill, but I think the effect of it is and, Senator Wehrbein, you can either agree or disagree with this assertion. But I think in many ways it's a packed with us...between us and the regents guaranteeing to them that we are seriously studying the issues of higher education and not just doing this as an excuse to bring Kearney into the system and then being done with it. The second concern, and I'll address that, because Senator Wehrbein did it with a statement of what his desire is and what he hopes the intent of the Legislature is in the intent of the study, is a look at all of higher education...look at the other three institutions, I guess is the way they stated it, that we not just do this study of Kearney, you know move Kearney and then study whether we ought to bring Kearney in or not. I assured them, and I assured them that I would...assure the rest of the body that that is not the intent at all. The intent of this bill is to study our entire makeup of higher education, including the university system, including the full state college system, including Wayne, Chadron, Peru and Kearney, and also including the community colleges. Community colleges are a definite piece of the puzzle and there are growing concerns in our state about the future of some of our community colleges. So the second concern they had was that one. The third concern they had was they wanted to make sure that there was some sector representation, that this would not just be a closed group of people running roughshod over higher education, meeting behind closed doors, making star chamber types of decisions about the future of higher education without consulting the leadership of higher education in our state. Senator Scofield has an amendment that she'll be bringing up in a few moments which addresses that concern. And with those concerns answered they were much, much more comfortable with the bill, to say that they are leading parades down "O" Street in support of the bill right now is probably an overstatement. They are not, you know, ecstatic over it. But I think with those three things taken