

care of, an assurance that this is a genuine, real study, and that if it concludes something other than what we're doing at the moment the Legislature will revisit the issue, the assurance that it is a look at all of higher education and not just Kearney State, and...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR WITHEM: ...the guarantee...what's that time? One minute...the inclusion of some sector representation as the study goes through, and this will be done through an amendment specifying who the advisory committee is, they're much more comfortable with the bill. I think in reading the transcript of what the regents had to say all along, their position was they're not opposed to changes in higher education, they think a strategic planning process is necessary. Their preference was to see Kearney...the Kearney issue delayed until the study process was done. With these three amendments I think that they feel less uncomfortable with the inclusion of Kearney in the bill at this point and feel much, much more comfortable with the direction that this study will go. And I hope that what I've said is fairly accurate, at least my impressions that I had after talking with them. Senator Wehrbein's amendment is a piece of this puzzle and I support his amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Wesely, followed by Senators Crosby, Scofield and Kristensen.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members. I would rise in support of the amendment, but want you also to know that I think it does absolutely nothing and is a futile attempt on the part of the board of regents to save face over what I think has been a display of lack of will on the part of a body that I think should have much stronger and much more forcefully dealt with this issue. Now that may be regent bashing, as Senator Withem said we're prone to do around here. But perhaps in this case it may be appropriate. I think the sequence of events in the last week would certainly be the board of regents equivalent of doing an impression of a political windsock. As the wind blew different directions they would change course, back and forth on the issue, trying to explain themselves, first taking one position, then another, then trying to clarify and further clarify. And, frankly, it was kind of amusing in some ways and certainly sad in others. And I find that unfortunate because I have a lot of respect for some members of the board of regents.