

postsecondarily our young people in this state and, for that matter, nontraditional students and we do make a subsidy, a large subsidy, to that educational system. When I have to come down and balance on balance what I want to do with our taxpayers' dollars, do I want those taxpayers' dollars to go to students who attend public institutions whom we already subsidize with our dollars, or do we want that to go to a higher percentage to the private institutions? Then I have to say, no, I think it's fair and it's right for me to spend our taxpayers' dollars on our public institutions and that includes scholarships. If you vote for this amendment, you are making a policy decision, in my estimation, that you want the higher distribution of that fund to go to private institutions. It's a simple issue with a lot of ramifications, but it's a simple decision. Do you want to have a higher proportion of your scholarship money in this program? By the way, we have somewhere between seven and nine million that we do give towards scholarships in this state. So it's not that we're not making a pretty significant effort. But do you want to do that? Do you want to have the distribution go towards independent students...independent institutions...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: ...or do you want them to augment public institutions? I think you can make some great arguments that lower income people, by and large, comprise a large majority of our public institutions. It's not a total statement. Obviously, we have incomes of all spectrums in both sets, private and public, but on balance I think it's a fair policy decision to say we ought to support our public institutions to a larger degree than the private. I have made that decision. I can make that decision and vote against this amendment. You can make that decision later if you vote against this amendment but if you don't vote against this amendment, I think the decision is already made. I would urge the rejection of the amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Scofield.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. President and members, I, too, rise to oppose this amendment and to caution the members to make sure you understand what choices we have before us before we move ahead on this. One thing that came up the last time when the discussion on this issue got a little bit heated I think is partly due to a misunderstanding in terms of just terminology