

We were just making decisions on Bergan Mercy and St. Joe's without having any idea what the current quality of the programs are or what effect the new program that Bergan wants will have on that quality issue. We are shooting in the dark. We are making decisions in the closet here, and I think we ought to open up the light and let a little information shine down on us, and let us make our decisions in a better fashion, so I would ask your support for this amendment. It is something that would at least help, as we pass CON weakening legislation, that would help us get a better handle on the cost issue that is so important to us, I would hope.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Schimek.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I am torn between trying to call the question or whether to speak on this, and I guess I am going to put you through a couple more minutes because I am really feeling much the same as Senator Warner does, that Don has not gotten any support on this floor today for his amendments, and I am kind of afraid that this is one of those issues that is a sleeper issue and we are all going to wake up one of these days and realize that maybe we weren't paying enough attention to this issue. I was asleep during the first day that we discussed it. I couldn't really figure out what was going on and, finally, I think towards the end of that discussion, I sort of woke up. We talked on this floor for a good long time about the need to contain costs of higher education and how we needed to get a higher coordinating system for that, and I don't know if this is a good analogy. I don't know if it is any better than the grocery analogy but it seems to me that we are going the wrong direction on this whole thing, that we need to be talking about ways to contain costs and we need to be listening to some of the things that Don has told us, but to this specific amendment, I would just like to say that it is my understanding, according to the summary that Senator Wesely has given us, that the data that is going to be collected is already reported under existing systems and that it is not going to be that much more trouble or that much more cost to get that information. What this amendment will allow is that this information can be put together and disseminated, and I think it is very important that we take a good look at this amendment, and I am not going to take my entire five minutes. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Elmer, please.