

of equities that are involved in this proposal. But what the resolution does is simply to authorize the Board of Regents to implement a program such as this if the Legislature funds it. It does not mandate that they do it, but this is a precursor to the offering of that amendment to the budget bill. This resolution can be enacted without that amendment. I want the amendment, but the amendment would not be complete without this resolution, and the resolution has to go first. So if you have any questions, I will answer them; if you don't, I hope that you will vote in favor of this resolution.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the Chambers resolution, Senator Withem, followed by Senator Nelson. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I am rising in support of Senator Chambers' resolution. I believe it is good public policy for the state to have a program such as this. Comment, that Senator Chambers had introduced a piece of legislation, this is not a new concept, he brought a piece of legislation to the Education Committee. The committee acted upon the bill very favorably, advanced the bill unanimously to the floor of the Legislature. It probably is not going to come up, so the avenue that he is taking, particularly because the private money is available this year, I think is one that should be supported. The committee heard testimony and felt very strongly that there is an alarming decline in the number of minority students that are attending our universities and that this is a factor that the Legislature should act upon, so I'm going to support the resolution. I would ask a question of Senator Chambers, maybe as much for the record as anything else.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR WITHEM: Senator Chambers, originally you had a piece of legislation and the preferred avenue was to pass substantive legislation. Is it your opinion though that the Board of Regents, because they are the governing institution for the university system, would have the authority to create such a program if they so desired and they wouldn't necessarily need the substantive legislation to pass?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: That's true. They would not need the substantive legislation, but one reason I wanted to offer a bill was so that there could be the notification to the public, there