

years. It has been eliminated without the will of the Legislature. It has been eliminated not recognizing that appropriations have occurred, and it is just an example, it is not the only example, of where the Legislature has given intent, funding, and direction, and the Department of Economic Development over the last years has ignored the will of this Legislature and gone off on its own, and I simply think that some accountability and some accounting for that has to occur. The easy thing to do would be to follow along the line and just ease up again with this department and give them back the flexibility that they want. But, frankly, they have, every time we have done that,...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...even when we haven't allowed for it, they have still come back and done whatever their desires call for. One of the things we did in this was call for strategies to be developed by the divisions in the department. We called for, also, an annual report to be submitted in the fall and these things, that I know of, have not occurred, even though they were mandated under the bill. In addition, and when we get back to it, I would like to talk more about some problems and inconsistencies with the legislation as it is drafted right now. I am simply sharing my frustration having been involved with this now for a number of years and, again, those of you who see this as purely partisan don't understand my longstanding interest in this. I believe that anytime any department decides to flaunt the will of the Legislature, there is some accounting that needs to occur, and that is simply what I am trying to do with this discussion at this point in time.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the indefinitely...the motion to indefinitely postpone the bill. Senator Baack, would you care to discuss it?

SENATOR BAACK: Yes, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. I rise in opposition to the motion to indefinitely postpone, and I think that, you know, Senator Wesely has done a very good job of reiterating some of the history behind the department, and I can assure you that this isn't just partisanship because I have had some real frustrations with the department myself, and I think just a couple of weeks ago, I expressed those frustrations here on the floor, and I hit the department pretty hard in some of the areas where I feel they have failed, especially in the rural