

SENATOR MCFARLAND: If Senator Withem can pick us up, I'd be glad to yield to him. (Laughter.) This is kind of a dull, dreary day. Maybe he could tell us a joke or something. You're having distributed to you a chart that I had prepared by my crack administrative assistant, who is a computer whiz. She designed this to perhaps explain, by diagram, what this amendment would do, if it is added. If this amendment was added, the various institutions that are designated on the bottom row would submit their budget requests and proposals to the board of regents. Then the board of regents would refer that budget request to the Legislature for consideration. The Legislature would appropriate a composite or lump sum appropriation and send it back to the board of regents for distribution. The bill, as it stands now in the process that is put in place right now, does not do that, but in fact requires that once the budget request is made by the board of regents, and they have considered the various priorities, the Legislature then makes the appropriations, not back through the board of regents, but back directly to the institutions themselves. We talked about this yesterday and the primary concern that I had was that, if you have a system where the Legislature is delegating those funds directly to the institutions, then you, in effect, make the board of regents more of an advisory board only, because they do not have final discretion on how those funds are allocated. And what would happen, I'm afraid, is that there would be so called end runs made on the board of regents whereby an institution, such as Peru who might not be satisfied with the way the board of regents considered their request, would say, well, even though the board of regents didn't give us what we wanted, we're going to go directly to the Legislature, ask for an appropriation directly back to us, and they usurp the authority and responsibility of the board of regents by going directly to the Legislature. And I recognize, and I think it was discussed on the floor yesterday, that even if you have this system in place where the appropriation goes back to the board of regents, you can still have end runs being made on the board of regents, just as they are being made now with some of the amendments to the appropriations bill. But the difference would be whereas, under this amendment, the appropriations would still come back to the board of regents and the board of regents would have the final discretion on how those funds would be allocated. Under the present system, as proposed, or I should say, under the system proposed there wouldn't be any discretion of the board of regents on how the funds would be allocated, because the funds would be directly allocated to the institutions. And