

my thought is that it would...the system, as proposed, would even encourage the end run process, even more than it is being used today. Whereas, under this amendment, I think you would discourage that type of end run process, because the board of regents would have the final discretion, and an institution that went to the Legislature would not be guaranteed of being successful, even if the funds were appropriated. That is the basis of the amendment. And I handed out information to you yesterday about support for this particular proposal. I think it is a fair proposal. I think it is a reasonable one. If we're going to establish a board of regents of higher education, and we ask that board to go ahead and propose a budget, list the priorities of spending that they have considered from all the various institutions, then we ought to be willing to give them the authority and responsibility to distribute those funds once the Legislature has made the appropriations. And it seems to me the better approach is, if there is a composite appropriation from the Legislature, it should go back to the board of regents, then they distribute it to the 11 institutions, or to the 7 institutions, individually, and not having the Legislature making those delegation of funding. So, for that reason, I would urge support of the amendment. I think it is a crucial amendment, a very important amendment, if this system is going to work as it is proposed. And, if we're trying to institute a system whereby the board of regents is the controlling authority and has the duty and responsibility of coordinating the seven educational institutions of higher education, I think this is a crucial element that they should have the final discretion on how the appropriations are distributed. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Withem, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. President, members of the body. We spoke on this yesterday, and we're almost ready to take a vote, I think, when we adjourn. So, hopefully, we won't have a lot of debate and discussion on this. Hopefully, people can remember the arguments given yesterday. I would also like to remind you of the...kind of went into extra innings on this bill yesterday when we had discussion on the budget on the floor in the afternoon. And we were confronted with the situation where some very well-meaning individuals here brought to us a recommendation to spend I think it was about \$900,000 on a capital repair project at the east campus of the university. This was a project that had not been prioritized terribly high by the board of regents, had not been in the budget