

what is the heart of a university, which is new knowledge, research, and the training of the first top-level searchers for...

PRESIDENT: Time.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...information and truth that a university can give us. What I am looking for in determining my decision is whether or not we place at risk graduate education in this state, and if I am persuaded that that is protected, I can vote for this bill. And if I don't see it or strongly enough, then I will be...I won't vote for the measure and I will wait for the day when I can see that. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Bernard-Stevens followed by Senator Wesely and Senator Barrett.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you. Mr. President, and members of the body, Senator Landis, you know, there is no crystal ball out there. I can't, and maybe someone else can, but I can't sit up here and say that if we went with 239 the new Board of Regents would take the graduate degree programs philosophically the way that you and I believe that they should be taken, and I totally concur with you that the heart and soul of universities are the graduate program and the research. I guess I can say that from my perspective now that I am concerned now, the way the system is now, about the graduate degree programs because the only entity standing as gatekeeper right now is the Legislature on who is going to get graduate degree programs. And I can see, there would be such demand out in the central and western part of the state and with changes in the body membership in times to come that there could be changes forced in the system from here, from this aspect, from the political aspect, and that concerns me. I do see, however, a board that combines those two interests together, the state colleges, particularly, and the university system as a potential for relieving that pressure so that decisions are made on good educational grounds rather than political grounds, which may happen here, and I know that is not an answer to your question and I wish I had more time to get into it, but I want to give some of my time to Senator Barrett. There is one component the Legislature has not talked about and, quite honestly, I think it should at least be in the minds of people when they do vote, and that is assume for a minute that LR 239 is passed and assume for a minute that the public agrees and approves it as well.