

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Nelson, followed by Senators Warner, Moore and McFarland.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I will have to say I was very impressed with Senator Crosby's description of the current Board of Trustees and, personally, I have no problem with many members of the Board of Trustees. Having served in education and an opportunity to speak, I know that my former regent would still prefer that they be elected. I had mixed emotions on this in both respects, but I think that if you check with a state that has them either elected or appointed, I don't care which way you do it, they feel that the other way is probably the better way. I know that our long list of our Board of Regents right now, it would seem like that we couldn't come up with better quality or better qualified people. I do have a problem though. It seems to me like the ones that have the most money and have the most time, qualified or not qualified, end up on the Board of Regents and I think last time in my area the campaign slogan was, well, it's just time for a change, put the old dog out to rest, I guess. But neither to say that whether the regents elected, but I think that if you ask the common people up and down the street, and Senator Crosby is right, the same way on the state legislator, you'd be surprised how many people, and that's a much smaller district, do not know who their state senator is. And I think if you would ask the people up and down the street who their regents are, I don't think that 50 percent of the people could tell you who their Board of Regents member is. So with that, even though I appreciate what Senator Schimek has done and the work that she has done on it, and if you ask the average person, certainly I want to have a say, certainly I think that you should be elected in a democratic way, but do you think that those same people would actually take the time to find the background and the qualifications and so on of that regent? I think they pay very little attention to it. I know that it's a lot of members for a Governor to come up with at one time, we discussed that, and to appoint that many people. I think our Board of Trustees, our College Board of Trustees are very well qualified and I know that it does take a lot of money to run for the regents and there are some people that may have the time to serve and could do very well, but simply do not have the finances to run for that board. So we went over this, a partially elected and a partially appointed, does give them some representation and it would seem like that the mix that we originally came up with still would be the better even though I