

been such a giant sponge taking up so much attention. LR 239 is a big deal. It's a big bill that deserves some attention and we've given it some attention this year, but LR 239 is the result of a year long study, LR 2...LB 247 Study Commission. The time is now to act on LR 239. Without saying anything more, I would just urge Senator McFarland to pull his bracket motion. If he's so convinced it's not going anywhere, then let it happen. Let us have a vote on it. Yes, I do oppose Senator McFarland's bracket motion. Hope he will withdraw it and we get on with, hopefully, advancing LR 239 to Final Reading.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: I agree with Senator Moore wholeheartedly. I think it's just kind of interesting the way Senator McFarland frames the argument. There have been, I think, one member of the body who has offered a number of amendments today. Two other members of the body, other than Senator McFarland, that have raised questions. So now suddenly we are to conclude that, oh, my gosh, there's no support for this proposal; the world's coming to an end; my gosh, people are asking questions and offering amendments, woe is us; as a Legislature, let's bracket the bill and be done with it. And, in essence, I can't control the fact, Senator McFarland, that people raise questions. They raise some good questions. I think it's been a good, constructive debate. Senator Chambers has raised some good points. Senator Schimek has raised a couple of points. You have offered an amendment or...I don't even know if you've actually brought any of them to a vote. I know what your position is on the bill and bracketing the bill is one way of killing it and that's fine if you want to do that. But just as far, so the members of the body understand what it was you used for arguments because three members of the body have raised some questions, four members of the body have raised some questions, we, as a Legislature, can't deal with this because they must be just terrible things with the bill, I don't think that's a very valid argument. I'd suggest, rather than delaying the bill, if that's the concern, let's get on and deal with what else is on it and let the body make a decision on it. This is a matter that the Legislature last year at this time felt very strongly needed to be done. We needed to bring about some coordination in higher education. This is the proposal that's before us and the Legislature ought to be given an opportunity to determine whether they like this proposal or whether they do not, so I would urge the Legislature to oppose the bracket motion.