

March 14, 1991      LB 561, 625

PRESIDENT MOUL:      Thank you, Senator Robak. Are there any senators who wish to speak on this issue? Seeing none, we will proceed to vote on the advancement of LB 561. All those in favor please vote aye, opposed nay. Have you all voted? Please record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK:      25 ayes, 0 nays on the motion to advance the bill.

PRESIDENT MOUL:      LB 561 is advanced. LB 625.

ASSISTANT CLERK:      LB 625 was a bill that was introduced by Senator Warner. (Read title.) The bill was read for the first time on January 23, referred to the Education Committee, which reports the bill directly to General File.

PRESIDENT MOUL:      Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM:      Yes, Madam Chair, members of the body, I'm handling LB 625 for Senator Warner. It deals with the question of coordination in the area of higher education. As you know, we passed a constitutional amendment, was approved by the voters, dealing with overall coordination in higher education, coordination among the various sectors of higher education. The community colleges are a stickier area in terms of coordination, because they are locally elected boards making governance policies within specific areas of the state that are determined within the statute. There is a voluntary association of community colleges that seeks to provide coordination within the community college system, so that the different areas can work better together. As we are moving toward coordination among the various sectors of higher education, and as the constitutional amendment did provide coordination between community colleges and the universities, and the state colleges and, to an extent, the private colleges and universities, there needs to be some way in which there can be a voice speaking for the community colleges themselves. And that is what this bill provides for, provides that this heretofore voluntary association of community colleges will become the recognized coordinating entity for the community colleges themselves. It does not mean that they are separate from the Coordinating Commission. It means that when we ask for the community colleges voice on items, that this will be the voice of the community colleges. I would ask your support for the bill, and maybe just point out, finally, that nothing in this bill should be construed to interfere with the