

March 25, 1991      LB 663

Well, I hope that some of you young people live long enough to see that happen. I predict it will never happen. And, if it does happen, it will be a cause for great rejoicing. But I would just suggest that...

PRESIDENT MOUL: Time.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...to automatically surrender this authority is a mistake. I oppose Senator Beutler's amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Schmit. I'll now recognize Senator Withem, followed by Senator Warner and Senator Wehrbein. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Madam Chair, members of the body, I am going to vote for the Beutler amendment, and I'll give you my reasons why. I understand there are some good arguments on both sides of this issue, and it's not one I feel either is critical for the passage of the bill, or it's adoption will doom the ultimate success of the bill. Senator Moore did raise a couple of constitutional sorts of questions, citing the language in Section 1, paragraph 1, or paragraph 2, whichever one it was, that gives the coordinating commission the power to review capital construction projects which utilize tax funds. And he questioned whether this doesn't utilize tax funds, so maybe we can't give that power. Later on in the constitutional amendment it does say the Legislature may provide the commission with additional powers and duties related to postsecondary education, as long as such powers and duties do not invade the governance and management authority, et cetera. So I think this is clearly constitutional. I guess I don't understand why Senators Schmit and Moore want to retain this power that really has never been exercised as far as I've seen it. The reason it hasn't been exercised is we, as legislators, and even those sitting on the Exec Board, sit there with hundreds, some years thousands of ideas brought before it dealing with everything from oh, cinch bugs, to licensing of new car dealers, to scenic rivers, give Senator Lamb a little bit of a plug there, and we do not then have the capacity to fully examine these capital construction needs that are funded by revenue bonds. I can recall one I was just livid about a few years ago where we were in the midst of needs to coordinate higher education, upgrade higher education. We were finding a mechanism to build a practice facility for the football field. And we, as a Legislature, really didn't give that much consideration at all. It wasn't tax money, it was a