

committee pretty much to the way it was previous to this. With that, if you have any questions, I'd be happy to respond.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Nelson, you wish to speak to the amendment.

SENATOR NELSON: Yes, ma'am, I believe that since the amendment becomes the bill, Senator Withem put it very, very well. I consider this one of our most important bills, if not...and I don't know what else could come in. When you travel on the national level, you find that Nebraska is considerably behind times in...in assessment. We have no statutes. Most states do. We've not established guidelines and it's certainly time that we do it for our education system. What we've been doing is not good enough. We must improve upon what we're doing and there's only one way we know what that vision is or how we expect to get to that...to that point. We do have to make some changes. Senator Withem very ably explained the bill and there's not a lot that I can say to add to it. But we need to address our...our basic skills, our thinking skills. We need more performance based education, more creative thinking. I can go right down the line and this is very, very important to education and I would hope that you would support the bill. I feel very, very strong about it.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Nelson. Senator Wesely. Senator Wesely waives. Senator Robinson.

SENATOR ROBINSON: Madam President, members of the body, may I...question for Senator Withem. After this process is completed, will there be any teeth into it for the improvement of...you get schools one through ten and they're way below average in all four areas. What...what do you see as a follow-up to this?

SENATOR WITHEM: At this...at this point...at this point, the concept of sanctions and rewards is not included in this...

SENATOR ROBINSON: (inaudible)

SENATOR WITHEM: There are lots of states that are doing that...working and moving in that areas. I would anticipate that that's one of the next steps that we would need to work on, either as a Legislature or as the Department of Ed or whatever. But at this point, there are no sanctions or rewards built into