

have the power, tomorrow, if they would wish to, to provide whatever assessment methodology they would want.

SENATOR MOORE: They have that existing power. The bill doesn't give them that.

SENATOR WITHEM: That's right. This bill does not grant that to them.

SENATOR MOORE: And is...is...I mean, last question, Senator Withem, but if we're going to, and if you don't want to answer that's fine, too. But if this commission comes back with a whole new way of assessing kids, would it be your opinion that it would be wise for the Department of Education to go it alone, so to speak, without some input from the Legislature?

SENATOR WITHEM: Oh, I think probably it would be a good idea. And that's just one of those ideas that if we want to sit down over the interim and build in some safeguards, that would be a perfectly acceptable safeguard, as far as I'm concerned, in terms of some sort of return to the Legislature with reports and some affirmative action by the Legislature, where appropriate, to put this into place. I'm not arguing whether...I was trying to give you a factual answer of what the facts currently are. As far as what should happen, if that's your point, I would agree with you that it would probably be a good idea.

SENATOR MOORE: Thank you, Senator Withem. And you've eased some of my concerns. You almost raised a few more questions, unfortunately. But nevertheless, I think it's clear that this bill, by itself, is not the enemy for many of those people. But the result of this commission may well do that, and we don't know that yet. I, myself, have, for years, been of the opinion and share concerns of Senator Withem, we must create some sort of assessment measurement to measure our progress in schools. And I want to continue doing that. I want to go down that path. I share the concerns of many of the opponents of LB 245. And if some of the things they're talking about come true, I would be ardently opposed to it. Senator Withem, given your...I would like to work with you over the summer...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR MOORE: ...summer to make sure any safeguards, that nothing happens by itself and I'm confident it will not.