

out the bills concerning ESUs with the dialogue that has gone on with the Department of Ed saying that, in fact, they would do that study but it would include representatives from the Legislature and from the ESUs and a number of people and so I guess specifically are you saying or am I not hearing the specifics? Right now I didn't know that special education was going to be included, school finance, and ESUs. I'm not sure with this that you get all of those done and would you give me what the priority is or exactly your dialogue, I guess, communications with the department on how the funding will be spent and for which studies?

SENATOR HALL: Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Bohlke, for the question. I think there is a misunderstanding of what the amendment does. The amendment goes into their...would be going into a policy research fund that they have. And this amendment does not specify anything that they have to specifically do on policy research, anything. There's nothing in this amendment. It simply puts the dollars in the fund so that when after the smoke clears of this session and there is still a question of ESUs, the people are wanting to know what the effect are, there is going to be the question of what they're going to be doing on recommendations on special ed. There is going to be all the other things we're doing on the Education Committee that they have the dollars to be able to do the areas that will be of priority in the summer. And this just gives them the dollars so they can be flexible so they don't have to raid other areas or simply ask people to do work on these areas that are already doing three other jobs. It provides them the flexibility to do what we're going to ask them to do.

SENATOR BOHLKE: So that would be one choice giving them the flexibility. The other would be if we thought something was particularly a priority item would be to be more specific with this?

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Yeah, and I wouldn't take any more of your time because I've got my light on. I may be next and I'll get into that.

SENATOR BOHLKE: All right, and that's probably part of the discussion, like I said. The reason we haven't gotten a lot of phone calls, I think, on the whole issue of the role and mission