

SENATOR WESELY: So the committee amendments didn't lose the supporters. Did it gain support from the opposition then? I guess, I was wondering. I see that there's lots of folks and some of them I do know personally, have they...with the committee amendments, do you have some sense of consensus or...

SENATOR HALL: I believe that there is. I cannot tell you and I will not tell you that there aren't people who would still not prefer to see anything happen. But I know that the committee amendments have, I guess, reduced the fears that individuals had. The major issue that was addressed was the one that Senator Warner spoke about in his opening on the committee amendments and that being the incorporation of the commission under the Department of Labor. That no longer exists. When that went away, I mean, a vast majority of the folks felt that it was just a way to do away with the commission, possibly stick them under another entity of government and have them disappear. And that would not be my intent. It was not the intent of the administration or the committee.

SENATOR WESELY: I see. I appreciate that. I have followed with interest the EOC and have been involved in some of the issues over the years. My general perception has been that they have been controversial but I think they've also been quite good in a number of ways in that I know in terms of number of business people...representatives that they do feel that the commission has been valuable in addressing the equal opportunity issues, that they much prefer the state, through the commission addressing those issues versus the federal government intervening, and so we need to maintain the good that we've got with the commission and not lose that as we make changes to try and make improvements and those improvements have certainly got all of our attention how we might make advances with the commission. At the same time, I recall as we worked through this issue with Senator Schimek and the legislation with Kurt Hohenstein a couple years ago and I'm not so sure that that worked advantageously in the end. So sometimes when we think we're making improvements and reform is something that we think we want to accomplish it doesn't always play out the way we hope and so being cautious and concerned about how we proceed, I think, is valuable but I do appreciate that the committee has looked at this and has made amendments that seem to address concerns and so I applaud the effort of the committee to be responsive to the people who have expressed concern about the