

Now I also want to make clear that the committee did take an up or down vote on this specific item before we...before the final budget recommendation and amendment was drawn up. And I don't remember whether there were three votes or four votes and I haven't had the time to go and check, but there were obviously not five votes late in our decision-making process to include this...the funds to keep the community colleges flat. You know, I obviously did it last year because I am supportive of the mission of community colleges. I think they're very cost efficient. I think they serve a portion of our population that, until the community colleges got really rolling, were not being served, and I just think there's very good public policy reasons for supporting the community colleges. But I wanted to make clear that I certainly am consistent in my position of supporting the dollars for this beginning with last year through the adoption of the budget, through the override. I might have been a little bit asleep at the switch early in our process this year and not maybe been diligent enough to make sure that it was in up front, but from the mid point of our discussions through the end tried to be supportive of this appropriation this year. So I'm going to continue to be consistent with my feeling relative to this particular issue and intend to support the amendment to the amendment by Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Question.

SENATOR CROSBY: The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I do see five hands. The question is, shall debate cease? All in favor vote aye, opposed no. We are voting on ceasing debate. Have you all voted? Record, please.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays, Madam President, on the motion to cease debate.

SENATOR CROSBY: Debate ceases. Senator Bernard-Stevens, you are recognized to close on your amendment.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Madam President. I will give the first part of the opening (sic) to Senator Will.

SENATOR CROSBY: You can give the first part of the closing to Senator Will.