

the property tax fight and they'll try to struggle and do those things. No matter which way you vote you're going to send the wrong message. So, Senator Bernard-Stevens, the policy choice we had here is it's easier for the community colleges to realize over a period of six years, that the state has a serious question whether we should continue them on property tax or whether there should be some mix. But it's going to allow them their own self-determination. It's going to force them to make their own tough decisions within their bodies and not have us do it. And so I'm going to urge, if it does go to a vote, I'm going to urge people just to be not voting because I don't want them to send the wrong message either way they vote. And that, I hope, gives you some inside, at least from my point of view, of what we discussed in Revenue Committee why we went eight to four and didn't make the ultimate choice of state takeover. Because that certainly was one of our discussions. And we think the community colleges are very aware of the policy choice that faces them the next six years and they can't put that off. And quite frankly, if they do put it off, the choice will get made for them. At that, at the end of that time they won't have much of a system left. I would...I'm not in favor of the amendment. I would be not voting on it, I would hope others would be not voting as well. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Senator Kristensen. Senator Wickersham, on the Bernard-Stevens amendment.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Thank you, Mr. President. Well, whether I'm not voting or simply voting no, I guess isn't as difficult a decision for me, although I think Senator Kristensen, perhaps, has laid out relative considerations for the rest of you. I think normally, many of you would expect me to vote yes on Senator Bernard-Stevens' amendment. I've been a sponsor of legislation to remove the community colleges from the property tax base, period, to change their administrative structure, and to assure that they're paid for entirely out of state dollars. But I think as Senator Kristensen noted, that isn't a decision that we should make tonight. That is a decision that needs to be more carefully considered and provided for than what we're able to do now, even though I'll acknowledge to, for Senator Bernard-Stevens' benefit, that it isn't something that's going to happen overnight anyway, as I understand it, under his amendment. But I don't, I don't think that's a decision whether we should make at 8:47 tonight, although I've seen stranger