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guess a couple of things. One is, from the standpoint of the higher education institutions, it's more likely you're able to keep those students in the state. And secondly, I think it probably enhances the efficiency of the higher education system, in that there are certainly some students, maybe high achieving students, or others, that have...would have the opportunity to begin to gain college credits while they're still in high school. So for all those reasons, I think what you're suggesting is not only important, but something that we're going to try very hard to pursue.

SENATOR JENSEN: So you will try to link as much of this together as possible, then?

SENATOR RAIKES: That's right.

SENATOR JENSEN: All right. Thank you. I'll return the rest of my time to the Chair.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Jensen. Senator Raikes, you may continue.

SENATOR RAIKES: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I will again emphasize, the...quickly, the overview here is the following. This is a problem that has been presented to us, if you will, with some late notice. But I think it is a very important issue, both in terms of quality of education in the state, in terms of the challenges we face in providing a good education to...good educational opportunity to the students in the state, and obviously, also, in terms of our state budget and outlays of money to serve the important needs in this state. We are proposing here one alternative, which I'll throw out that we really did consider some, but decided was not a good one, was to make some sort of a...try to make a recommendation in...as to what to do, in the form of introducing a bill at the beginning of this session which said, for example, we're going to restructure ESUs thus and so, we're going to restructure distance education consortia thus and so, we're going to recommend that this amount of money be appropriated for this particular technology, on this time scale. The fact is, we simply didn't at that point, and, I would tell you, still don't