

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 6, 2005

LB 689A

figure?

SENATOR RAIKES: I'll try. Well, I will respond, Senator. I think what I tried to convey, at least, whether I did or not, was that these are people who are expert in the area, that understand the technology, but yet don't have an ax to grind. They don't work for a telecom provider, for example. And in particular, I think one of the key players was a person who works for the NITC.

SENATOR BROWN: Okay. What...you also mentioned the purchase of a statewide software system that would allow districts to be able to work together. Could you tell us a little bit more about that, and about the potential cost of that? Blackboard, I think, was the name of the system that you referenced.

SENATOR RAIKES: Well, I'll try, Senator. And in a way, that gets, I think, a little bit beyond the pure technology or hardware issues, more into organizational issues.

SENATOR BROWN: Which is what I'm much more concerned about. (Laugh)

SENATOR RAIKES: Okay.

SENATOR BROWN: And is that something that you believe that the study will take care of?

SENATOR RAIKES: I think it's imperative that the study address those issues. And I'll mention in particular a couple of things which are controversial, came up in the hearing, and is clear that there are people on both sides of these issues. We have, I think, 17 or 18 ESUs in the state. And their function reaches into the area of technology. They do other things as well, certainly. They vary different...greatly in the number of students they serve per ESU, and in the amount of funding per student they have available. I think that's an issue that needs to be addressed. In addition, dealing more directly with distance education in particular, there are a number of...and I'm going to say nine, and that's probably the wrong number...a number of distance education consortia located in the state,