

PRESIDENT: Motion prevails. Senator Wesely, you may close.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. I'll try and be brief. We've spent a lot of time on the bill and I apologize for that. But there are legitimate questions that have been raised. Let me tell you. As Senator Chambers said, you don't know what this is going to do, how are you going to be able to vote for it. Let me tell you I know what it's going to do. It's going to work great, and I'm absolutely convinced of that. But I know many of you have your concerns. So I'm telling you right up front, and we did put a sunset clause on this, it is the first time we'll go through this different approach to the licensure questions. So, even though I have supreme confidence in its ability to work, and other states have tried this, and it has functioned well, I know many of you have or are experiencing trepidation about moving forward with this legislation. I think it will work. I think what we are talking about here is pure and simple, another opinion, an independent opinion to allow the members of the Public Health and Welfare Committee and the members of this Legislature another viewpoint on the licensure issue. That is all this does. It doesn't change any options we now have, doesn't change any responsibilities or rights we now have as a Legislature, other than it gives us another approach and a process that is more systematic than the one we've had in the past dealing with the issue. I think that is very important. I'd also like to say Senator Marsh talked about she's tried, for five years, to pass legislation and how she's upset and isn't going to vote for the bill. Well let me tell you something, a lot of different people have tried for years and years. Social workers have tried to get licensure. Other groups have come in here and failed, and failed, and failed. That failure hasn't been under this process that we are proposing. That failure has come under the process we now have which is no process at all. But it is called political power, and that is how we determine, presently, licensure issues, political power. Those people, like Senator Marsh, and Senator Chambers, and Senator Higgins that are usually for the underdog and the little guy, are not seeing what I see in this bill. It equalizes the playing field for the weak and the strong, those that are now licensed, and those that are not licensed. It gives them both an equal opportunity with an independent look at the situation on the whole question that they are proposing in terms of licensure. Maybe, for once, maybe Senator Marsh will see something passed for