

whether you use 662 to address the free high issue, or some other bill, you've got to face up to it yet this year. But at this particular point in time, at this immediate moment I would ask you to adopt this amendment. If we have to fill in details, fine, we can do that as we go. But what you are doing today if you vote for it is literally committing yourself to changing the financing system of education. To the supporters of 662 I would say as follows, this may not be what you want today, but it is more realistic in terms of a long-term solution for the future. Senator Carsten served on the Revenue Committee as long or longer than just about anybody in this body. If anybody is intimately familiar with the problems, the issues and the complexities it is he. He was the one, if you recall at the last debate, that immediately stood up and said it is time to do it, and that is why he brought this amendment and we worked on it together, why we are offering it today. If you vote for it you are committing to change the system. You are locking yourselves in so to speak for the future. As I say, we still have to address the free high issue. Maybe another amendment can do that. But you are gutting the bill. To the opponents of 662 I would say this is maybe a more reasonable solution than simply ducking the issue or voting against 662. Now I cannot support 662 because, as I said, I, personally, believe it will engender more crisis than it will solve, but I am willing to try to offer reasonable alternatives and this, I believe, is a reasonable alternative. I urge you to support the amendment. As I say, to the supporters, I think it is time to say better look at the big picture and the long term, and this is the way of doing it, than the short term because I think the short-term solution in 662 will probably generate even more intense wars than already exist, all to no avail.

PRESIDENT: Before we proceed, the Chair would announce that we have guests in the south balcony this morning who are 129 students who are 11th and 12th graders. They are from most of the counties in the State of Nebraska. They represent the Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation Citizenship Seminar. So it is good that you are here this morning to watch legislation in progress. Would you stand and be recognized. We welcome you to the Nebraska Legislature. Speaking order is Senator Carsten next, then Senators Vard Johnson, Landis, Beutler, Goodrich and Higgins. Senator Carsten.