

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR WARNER: So the purpose of the language is to provide some backbone to the Department of Education to carry out some rules and regulation adjustments that can affect cost containment without severely hurting programs for those who are actually recipients of the special ed. program. It seems to me that the intent language, perhaps together with the study that the Education Committee is doing this summer, and I don't expect it to stay at this year's level, even though the intent language is there, but between the two it would seem to me that then a clear picture will be available to this body next session when appropriations come in. I would encourage you not to delete the language but view it as in there for the purposes that I have stated, to encourage everyone to understand that some cost containment opportunities that I'm sure are there, that were serious that they affect those and put them into place prior to the school year. It does no good, it does no good for next year unless something is done now. If you do nothing now then you are talking about no change until the '87-'88 appropriation. That is the way it works.

PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Warner. The Chair recognizes Senator Vard Johnson on the Hartnett amendment. We're talking on the Hartnett amendment, Senator Johnson.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I am rising in opposition to Senator Hartnett's amendment. I appreciate Senator Hartnett's point of view on the issue of special education costs, but I am of the opinion that there are areas that we simply have to put caps on so that we can, over a period time, affect change. As long as we do not have a cap on special education costs there is absolutely no real incentive to special education administrators, scattered throughout the State of Nebraska, to be prudent in special education expenditures. The special education side of the budget has grown astronomically over the last six years. It just strikes me that we have got to do what we can to stop the growth inasmuch as we pick up 90 percent of the growth costs. So I think that the intent language, which the Appropriations Committee put in LB 722, should be supported. I think that we need to let our school districts know that we are going to cap this item, and I think that the capping in and of itself will result in some serious