

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Thank you, Senator Higgins. It was a treat to hear from you. I was glad to see your light on and to recognize it. I want to acknowledge some visitors from Senator Lamb's district. We have 18 sixth graders that are from the Sandhills School in Brewster, Nebraska with their teacher and they are ensconced in the south balcony. Where are these students? We are glad you are here. From Senator Carsten's district, we have 20 fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. They are from District #10 in Union, Nebraska with their teacher and they likewise are in the south balcony and we would like to acknowledge your presence. Which ones are you? Oh, good. Well, we are glad you are here. We are now about to hear from Senator Chris Beutler who is from Lincoln.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I would like to support the Warner amendment. This is a particularly difficult area I guess in that it is true that their funds have not increased this year particularly but I think that one thing, whatever you decide, I think one thing you need to keep in perspective is the historic development of spending in this area. This is a rapidly expanding area in terms of spending and a rapidly expanding area in terms of programs, and it seems to me that if there is any area where we might want to step back a little and pause just a moment and consolidate and think about the programs and take a closer look at them, that this is probably one area where we might want to do that. Let me read for you some of the figures since 1980-81. Now 1980-81 the expenditures for mental retardation were about \$13 million. The next year they were \$15,500,000, the next year almost \$17 million, the next year \$18.2 million, last year \$21 million. So from '80-81 to '84-85 in a five year period, we have gone from \$13 million to \$21 million. That is quite a rapid expansion in my opinion and it would seem to me that Senator Warner is probably correct in assessing the situation that they could probably bear this cut given the historic development as well as the other agencies that have been asked to take a cut. I would recommend the supporting of the Warner amendment.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Hoagland, you are now on.

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Mr. President and colleagues, as difficult as it is for me to give a speech on this issue, I