

studied this issue last summer, it became clear to us that this council, which hasn't been funded by the way for the last three years, so therefore it hasn't been doing anything anyhow, never did really function and do the job that was envisioned when it was created. Instead the select committee determined that the most prudent means of action was to continue the legislative oversight which we began with the select committee in an attempt to see to it that the various agencies of government, who are involved with special education, preschool, were providing those services in the most efficient and effective manner. That is the purpose of the bill, is to eliminate this statutory requirement for this council, which I repeat has not been funded and, therefore, has not been operating for the last three years. Instead the intent is that the Legislature, itself, continue more in an oversight role of that particular function. I would urge the adoption or the advancement of LB 904. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Senator Abboud.

SENATOR ABOUD: Yes, Mr. President, would Senator Vickers yield to a question?

SENATOR VICKERS: Certainly.

SENATOR ABOUD: Senator Vickers, will this be seen as a...will this be seen as a sign that the Legislature is insensitive to special education, for those people that are involved in this particular program, by the passage of this bill?

SENATOR VICKERS: Well, I would hope not, Senator Abboud. The people involved in special education, both providers and parents, were very deeply involved with the interim study done by this committee and were part of the decision-making, if you will, in the development of this particular piece of legislation, along with a number of others. But, no, I think instead the commitment that the Legislature has begun to make, with the oversight process that I mentioned, and enlightening a lot more members of the Legislature to the programs and the need for those programs, is probably a plus that far overshadows the negative that you are pointing out, especially in light of the fact that we have not funded it, it has not been operating anyhow.