

returning to the United States from Vietnam, and I am concerned that we are taking away a program that might be utilized, but I recognize that many of the Vietnam veterans are getting up in age, not nearly as old as the World War II vets, but I am sure that most of them tried to readjust and develop careers on their own but I still have some concern. I am not necessarily going to say I will vote for the bill here today because I absolutely don't know at this point what the need may be but I would like to check with those groups and I may be voting against the advancement of the bill until I have an opportunity to talk with some of my good friends in those organizations.

SENATOR CARSTEN: The next one is Senator Higgins, but before you speak, Senator Higgins, I have an introduction I would like to make if I may. From Senator Chris Abboud's District, there are 50 students from Blumfield Elementary School in Ralston with their teachers. We recognize you if you will stand. Welcome to the Unicameral. Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Johnson, you raised a question, if you look in the fiscal note on this LB 1100, it says during the November Special Session the Legislature merged this aid program with the agency's operational budget, the agency being the Department of Veterans Affairs. The intent was for the agency to make loans if possible with available resources. The agency has not granted any additional loans since the special session reductions. The original appropriation in this program was \$6,000 from the General Fund. The agency granted \$1,706 in loans before the special session reduction. And then it goes on to say, revenue will also decrease under this bill since veterans are required to repay loans at 5 percent interest. I, too, have some reservations about voting for this bill. I think before I could vote on it, I would like to visit with the Department of Veterans Affairs and find out if we did appropriate 6,000, if this fiscal report is right, or if I am reading it right, why only 1,706 was granted, or did those Vietnam veterans go through the federal government to get educational loans. There might be a very good reason for it, but I agree with Senator Rod Johnson, I have some reservations about it. It may be just a clean-up bill but, on the other hand, I, for one, think the Vietnam veterans got the shortest end of the stick of any group of men and women that served in any war or police