

SPEAKER NICHOL: The question is the adoption of the committee amendments. All those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Record, Mr. Clerk, please.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 2 nays, Mr. President, on adoption of the committee amendments.

SPEAKER NICHOL: The committee amendments are adopted. Now we are back to the bill. Senator Warner and then Senator Haberman.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, I would rise to support the advancement of the bill. Senator Landis has pointed out that this program, when it was initially established, had for its purpose to provide incentives to have Guard strength to remain at a hundred percent of their authorized strength and as a practical matter that goal has been reached. In fact, in some cases they are well over their authorized strength so it is more than that but there is another thing that has occurred at the federal level that brought this issue up and that is the fact that authorization at the federal level was enacted and came into effect last year, I believe. It is comparable to the GI bill concept that we are all familiar with and in this case under those provisions individuals who are in the Guard do...those that do qualify, and as I recall, quite a number can, are reimbursed up to \$140 a month for education which goes directly to the recipient. And when we begin to look at that as the Guard is beginning to look at it and as the Governor began to look at it last year, between the two programs that whether or not some minor adjustments that could be made that would somewhat reduce the state impact and still retain the policy purpose of maintaining the Guard at a hundred percent strength. So there are two programs, not just this one, but the federal program as well which is reimbursed directly to the individual. And it seems very reasonable with the very minor limitations that are suggested now are required by 931 as it is presently amended a reasonable policy. Currently this year we spent \$723,000 between the appropriation and the deficit bill. It is anticipated that the reduction, potential reduction in the cost of the program would be up to \$100,000, through these provisions are enacted, at least that would be reached in time and I think that is an appropriate cost avoidance but to retain all of the policy requirements, all the policy purposes that was originally enacted and that was to encourage and assist the Guard to remain at their authorized strength. So I would urge that the bill be advanced. I think Senator Landis and the Government and