

budget to do this or not. It is my impression that if we don't raise taxes, we won't have the money for it and so I am going to make a later decision as to whether to support it on Final Reading or at Select File. But surrounded as I am by students, I understand their needs and both private and public students have a difficult time before them right now achieving a college education and in principle I intend to support LB 190.

PRESIDENT: Let me clear up the board here to see what members wish to speak on this, Senator Chronister's amendment. Senator DeCamp, your name is here. Senator DeCamp. Senator Rod Johnson. I know that Senator Johnson wants to talk on the bill ultimately. Senator Hoagland, you are next. Following you, Senator Hoagland, there are Senators Pappas, Scofield, Warner and Nichol.

SENATOR HOAGLAND: I stand in support of this amendment, Mr. President and colleagues, and I sincerely hope that the Legislature will listen carefully and take the opportunity that Senator Chronister is offering us to fill an important gap in the Nebraska social service fabric. This amendment would do two things. It would enact for the first time in the State of Nebraska a state aid program with funds going directly to the students based on need. Right now all state aid money goes through the public institutions of higher education and three out of four dollars are distributed on a nonneed basis. I should clarify that. Three out of four dollars are distributed without any statutory requirements that need be the criteria. So what we have in Nebraska, we are one of the very few states that does not have a need based scholarship program for students of higher education. Now, we have managed to get along relatively satisfactorily up to this point because of considerable aid available at the federal level, particularly through Pell grants. But, as we all know, with the budgetary difficulties at the federal level, those grant programs, those loan programs are being drastically curtailed and we are being left with a situation in Nebraska where we have a number of highly qualified students who normally would be college bound but are not because they can't afford to go to college. As Senator Warner stated so well, I think, several days ago, there are really two basic functions of government. The minimum functions of government we need to be concerned about is to provide an education, equal educational opportunity and I may be stretching his language a little bit, and to provide for the health of our citizenry because if people have a good education and if they are in good health, they can take care of