

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. President. I, too, rise in opposition of the indefinite postponement motion by Senator Warner. There are...I believe Nebraska is one state that will certainly be disadvantaged when it comes to students in need to be able to go to college. The average aid, in this bill, is expected to be from \$500 to \$700 range, meaning about 2,000 students could benefit by it. It is estimated that approximately 2,500 fewer Nebraskans will receive Pell grants for the upcoming fiscal year. This is in addition to the cuts in other programs. The...many of the federal cuts are only proposed on other programs. But the student aid cuts have already happened, and other programs have resources on which to fall back. But there certainly isn't any program that we can fall back on for student aid. There are now 46 states in the United States that have student aid programs, Nebraska would be one that would not have it. I think that what we are doing is putting money into other programs in the state, capital construction, in our higher education. But without the grants for the students to be able to attend private college, or a college of their choice, we are telling them that they cannot attend. I really believe this is as important a program as any that we've had, and I should say probably second to my homestead exemption program. I think it is vitally necessary for the students of this state that want to go to college, can't afford it, be given some help. Thank you very much. I oppose the indefinite postponement by Senator Warner.

PRESIDENT: Senator Scofield, Senator Morehead is next, then Senator Goll, Senator Wesely, Nichol, and Chronister.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Members of the Legislature, I don't know if I can improve any upon Senator Vard Johnson's comments. I suspect that I cannot. But I rise to urge you to avoid what would be a disastrous mistake with all the best intentions in the world, I'm sure. The appropriate thing to do with this bill, frankly, is to kill it. Take a look at your State Constitution, ladies and gentlemen. Do you see anything in there that says that the public...or private schools in this state are our obligation? Here we are in a time when we can't even adequately support our public schools. As Senator Johnson has pointed out, we've made all kinds of cuts and things that are clearly the state's obligation. And this particular bill asks us to spread our already too thin resources even thinner. This is clearly not a responsible thing for us to do in the State of Nebraska. I simply reiterate with you, if you want to solve this problem, join with me and let's talk to Washington about their