

SENATOR CARSTEN: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I have had passed out to you a letter that I have received from Mr. Bob Ripley, who is the person that deals with the environment and the environs of the Capitol, and based upon the contents of this letter is the basis upon which we have operated with not replacing the pictures at this point. I can tell you, as you may already know, they are not thrown away, they are not discarded. They are hanging in the Capitol, and that it has, in my opinion, been blown out of perspective. While I have been criticized and have had numbers of calls relating to this subject, I want you to know that it had nothing to do with any of the members of the Legislature whatsoever, that it is purely based upon the belief of the person that has been hired to look after the building and the continuation of the historical part that this building is so notably well known. I encourage you to read this letter and the comments that Mr. Ripley has made. I did put it on the agenda for the Exec Board, at the insistence of Senator Rupp and others, for consideration. But Senator DeCamp, in his usual expected way, upstaged us with this resolution and has brought it to the floor. I believe that it can be dealt with at a future time. I would support the motion of Senator McFarland and hope that you read Mr. Ripley's letter and digest it well as you make your decision. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Thank you, Senator Carsten. Senator Higgins, please.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Carsten, I just received the letter from Mr. Ripley, the Capitol Restoration Promotion Manager. On the last page he says, will the Legislature help preserve the artistic integrity of their own Chamber for the future by setting a precedent of keeping all nonoriginal ornament from the surfaces of the West Chamber, or will we allow nonoriginal ornaments to be affixed to this Chamber? I really don't believe the original Chamber had an electronic voting board, like we have, on its surface. I know what I am looking at right now, that says resolution LR 1, DeCamp, Journal page 47, refer to committee, McFarland, that was not in the original West Chamber. So, we have already put things on the surface of the West Chamber that were not there by the original design. I, therefore, cannot accept this letter as a valid argument for not replacing our presidents', Lincoln and Washington, portraits back up on the west wall. As regards to referring this back to the Reference Committee, I will be very