

What they were going to construct I cannot say. So all I am doing is saying for the good of the Legislature adopt what was originally Senator DeCamp's amendment and which I have changed so that it does not mandate that they cut programs, but only the frills, only those things not directly related to education, particularly the administrative costs. Again, one-third of the student population I am told has reduced in the last ten years in Omaha, but we can't find out how much they have reduced just the administrative staff. I don't know if they reduced the number of teachers when the number of students fell and I have not been able to find out, or at least the constituent that brought this to me has not been able to find out, did they reduce the paper shufflers, did they reduce the paper shufflers as much or anywhere near the percentage of the students that decreased? So with this explanation I would hope that this time you would adopt the amendment since it is not applying to programs. And in that way we will be able to hopefully reduce property taxes by giving state aid and not just continually give the state aid and our property taxes continue to rise. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Thank you. Senator Vard Johnson, please, on the Higgins amendment to LB 1.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, Senator DeCamp offered an amendment earlier this morning that said that all reductions in state aid should not be reversed, so to speak, by local school districts in raising their property taxes. Senator Higgins offers a somewhat similar amendment, this time requiring that local school districts effect that nonrise through the removal of so-called frills, et cetera. It has always seemed to me that the better part of discretion for us as a legislative body is to deal with the state aid issue as we would deal with it, provide whatever amounts we think we can reasonably afford on state aid and still allow local school districts to call their own shots. I think that is why school boards get elected. I think that they are the ones that are the most qualified to determine whether or not there will be tennis courts, swimming pools, football teams, basketball teams, soccer teams and what have you. They are the ones qualified to determine whether or not there will be sex education in the schools. They are the ones qualified to determine whether or not they will have four years of English in the high schools or three years of English in the high schools or what have you, and it just seems to me that for us to reduce state aid, which we are doing through LB 1 and at the same time, indicate to local