

and that you have passed, many of which have not been funded as of yet. But the machinery is there, the hope is there that we can provide a better opportunity to our young people. Now let me talk to you a little bit about the need for that opportunity. I think I understand that perhaps better than most that are here. I did not have that opportunity when I was growing up, therefore, I think I recognize the value of education, the value of that opportunity a little more than perhaps other people do. You know, you don't miss the water until the well runs dry. You don't realize how much it meant to you until you don't have it. And I can tell you that when you don't get that opportunity then you have to make up for it in other ways. It is that much tougher. It's not that it can't be done, but it is much tougher.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Excuse me, Senator Vickers. (Gavel.)

SENATOR VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. President, I think these statements are for the record anyway.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Once again I would require you to be a little more concerned about the speaker and the words that the speaker is saying. Please, please keep your voices down.

SENATOR VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. President. This effort on my behalf is to hopefully put in place for the future the mechanisms so that those opportunities will continue to expand in terms of excellence, in terms of higher quality and in terms of simply better opportunities. Now I know we have some economic difficulties now. I know that it looks like it is very difficult to do those things now, but it is not impossible, ladies and gentlemen, only we need to be innovative in how we do it. Senator Chambers has made some excellent arguments about some of the human services programs this morning and this afternoon and I'm not sure a lot of people were listening and unfortunately he was not able to win simply because the dollars weren't available, simply because some people didn't think they could wring out the money somewhere else. Well, I suggest to you the budget process of this Legislature is a matter of setting priorities. And if that priority is that we ought to encourage quality, we ought to encourage human services, we ought to do those things for those people who need it the most, then we ought to change those priorities and that is all I am suggesting that we do. I am suggesting we change those priorities so that we no longer send money out to the very lowest level in terms of the quality standards that we've