

March 29, 1979

LB 271

SPEAKER MARVEL: Do you want to direct your question to Senator Landis?

SENATOR FITZGERALD: Yes, sir.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Okay.

SENATOR FITZGERALD: Sir, you know on the state aid there is a certain organization that are eligible to give state aid to a needy veteran. Did you know that, Senator?

SENATOR LANDIS: Yes, all right.

SENATOR FITZGERALD: There is four organizations, DAV, American Legion, VFW and World War I and now you are opening this up here to the extent, don't you think these other organizations, you got the Military Order of the Purple Heart. They do not have 10% of their membership here in the state so they are not eligible to give out state aid which a commander and a quartermaster can give out but this is what I was getting at. Don't you think when they apply to the state they could automatically go over onto this council?

SENATOR LANDIS: No. Let me answer the question, Senator Fitzgerald, by saying that the committee amendments do not open up anything. They allow present law to continue to operate which means that veterans organizations that do qualify can then serve on the Board of Inquiry. This is not an opening up. If, in fact, LB 271 passes without the committee amendments it will foreclose and it will close up an open process that now exists and, secondly, the existing criteria are fairly clear. They do foreclose the possibility of small independent groups that do not have much membership from being allowed a seat on the Board of Inquiry but the criteria have been very effective in making sure that the ones that do sit on that board are representative and broad based. The existing criteria, I think, have served well and should be allowed to continue to exist. I want to remind the body this is not opening up anything. It is simply remaining open to question. It is allowing the existing criteria to continue to operate rather than stopping it and saying, no new organizations can qualify under that procedure.

SENATOR FITZGERALD: One more question please. Would you be agreeable if any organization is, by national charter, recognized, would you be agreeable to letting these people sit on the board?