

ASSISTANT CLERK: LB 857 was introduced by Senator Withem. (Read title.) The bill was read for the first time on January 3rd, was referred to the Government Committee, which reports the bill to General File.

PRESIDENT: Senator Withem, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: This is a bill that was brought to me by a constituent in my district who belongs to the organization known as the Paralyzed Veterans of America. Paralyzed Veterans of America is a recognized veterans organization, and there is a statutory definition of what it means to be a recognized veteran's organization. And being a recognized veterans organization allows them to participate with our veterans department in the state in administering veterans benefits. As I say, there is a definition in the statute of what it is. It's one that is chartered by Congress, has a state headquarters, and has enrolled in its membership in Nebraska at least 10 percent of the World War I, World War II, Korean and Vietnam War veterans. The Paralyzed Veterans of America has only recently become a recognized veterans organization. And when they went to the veterans council in Nebraska they found there was really no mechanism to provide this new recognition. So what this bill does is it simply places in statute those four organizations that meet this criteria that is in our statutes for being recognized. Those four are the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars the United States and the Paralyzed Veterans of America. I would urge you to support the bill.

PRESIDENT: Senator Schellpeper, please.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to say that this is Withem's bill and not mine. I would take credit for it, because it isn't that bad of a bill. But it's not my bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Did you wish to close, Senator Withem?

SENATOR WITHEM: I would agree wholeheartedly with Senator Schellpeper, that even though the board says otherwise, this is not his bill. But, if he'd like it, he could have it. I would be happy to let him add his name and take my name off of it, if that were his desire. I would urge you to support the bill.