

SENATOR ROBINSON: Currently, members of the Nebraska National Guard who attends a public university, college or community college are entitled to a credit of 50 percent of resident tuition. Spouses and children of guard members who die while in active service are entitled to a credit of 100 percent. (LB) 1139 amends the statutes to include tuition at private universities and colleges so long as the amount of reimbursement is no higher than the amount members or their surviving spouses and children would receive by attending UNL. For example, UNL resident tuition is \$72.75 per credit hour. A guard member attending UNL is entitled to reimbursement of \$36.37 per credit hour. A surviving spouse and/or children attending UNL is entitled to reimbursement of \$72.75 per credit hour. A Wesleyan University resident tuition is \$400 per credit hour. If LB 1139 is enacted, a guard member attending Wesleyan would be entitled to reimbursement of \$36.37 per credit hour. A surviving spouse and children attending Wesleyan would be entitled to a reimbursement of \$72.75 per credit hour. I just...I was visiting with Senator Wehrbein this morning, and I wanted to assure him that...let him know about the information that there is an appropriation. The appropriation now is \$750,000. Actually...the actual expenditures now are less than 600, it's on a first come, first served. So...and I am not advocating an increase of the \$750,000. Thank you. I'd encourage you to vote for the bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Robinson. Senator Janssen.

SENATOR JANSSEN: Madam Lieutenant Governor, members of the body, I am in support of this bill. The idea behind the whole thing is to allow access to higher education for people or persons that, as Senator Robinson indicated. If you have someone living in, say, Fremont or Blair, and there are independent colleges in that town, and they're a member of the National Guard, and it's very hard for them to continue their education, say at the University of Nebraska, Wayne State, Peru, or anywhere like that. And they have a good independent colleges in those cities. We're not talking about the amount of tuition at those independent colleges, we're talking about at the rate, the same as a state university or college. So this will open up higher education to more people. And it's not going to really raise the cost of anything. Accessibility to higher education is very important for people in those towns