

creative writing at the university and I audited it and there were several students in that class who had taken the class just for the purpose of learning how to write. They were trying to get articles published, books published and it was a very stimulating experience. And many of these people were senior citizens who were able to relate their lifelong experiences and bring an understanding and a depth to the entire class. If you look at the editorial that's on the front of the packet that I handed out, I thought there was an interesting comment made by the editor of the Daily Nebraskan, and he said, these senior citizens could bring a new perspective to many classes because of their experience. And he relates, for example, creating a semester project in Korean war history with a Korean war veteran would add a perspective not found in text or from the instructors. I think this is an excellent bill. It's an excellent opportunity. I think we need to make a statement of public policy to encourage our senior citizens to attend classes on a tuition-free, noncredit basis. It would be beneficial for our state, for the institutions that they attend and for the students and faculty who are at these particular educational colleges and universities. Therefore, I would humbly ask for your support for this bill. As I said, last year it advanced unanimously out of the committee. It, inadvertently, because of the time crunch, was not put on consent calendar, but I trust that you will approve it this session and I would ask for your support. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Withem, then Senator Lamb, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: Mr. President and members of the body, the Education Committee heard this bill. I believe it was the first bill that we heard this year. The committee, as Senator McFarland indicated, did advance the bill unanimously to the floor. I just wanted to kind of reiterate maybe some of the things Senator McFarland said because whenever you see a bill with a one-liner providing free tuition, it tends to raise the concerns of some members that it's going to be a significant financial impact. It is not. The way Senator McFarland has written the bill, it would apply only to senior citizens wishing to take a course for a noncredit basis only if there is room in the classroom and only with the permission of the instructor, I think. Somebody like Senator McFarland might wish to argue that it might even be too restrictive from an ideal sort of situation, but it is written in such a fashion as there will