

Committee. Last year we had it before the Education Committee, and it advanced from our Education Committee on a six to nothing vote, a unanimous vote. Also, I might add, we had had a summer interim...summer study program on this issue where students and their parents came in and spoke about this particular program and the benefits it would have for their own children and how in Nebraska we do so much and spend so much money for the really handicapped or the other students who have real special needs, physical or emotional needs, we spend millions of dollars on that, but yet we spend very little in the way of promoting the students who are the most talented in our junior and senior high schools. And most gifted programs, if there are any, are really administered through the local school district, they are not administered by the state. The idea is that this...by setting up a scholars program like this, at a cost of approximately \$200,000, you would be able to bring together groups of students from all across the state, have them learn, have them take that learning back to their school systems and develop a group of students and a network of students who are the best and brightest in our state and who would have the potential of being the future leaders of our state. I would urge you to consider advancing this from General File. I think it's a good concept. And I think in the...if this...assuming this bill advances, you will hear a lot of positive comments from the number of parents and students who are interested in gifted education and also from the large number of school administrators and teachers who also are focusing on this particular area. It is an area that has been neglected for too long across the country, a number of other states have implemented programs like this because they recognize the need for it. I think it's time for Nebraska to recognize the need as well. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion? Any discussion on the motion to advance 226? Senator McFarland, anything further?

SENATOR McFARLAND: Just move to advance it, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. The question is, shall LB 226 advance to E & R? Those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Voting on the advancement of the bill.

SENATOR McFARLAND: To speed this up, Mr. Speaker, maybe we should just have a call of the house and a roll call vote. Thank you.